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# HISTORICAL NOTES

ON THE

Church of Saint Guthbert,

IN WELLS;

THE PRIORY OF ST. JOHN,

COLLEGE OF LA MOUNTERY,

AND CHAPELS FORMERLY AT

SOUTHOVER, SOUTHWAY, POLSHAM, AND  
CHILCOTE.

BY

THOMAS SEREL.



---

"There be some who slight and despise this sort of learning, and represent it to be a dry, barren, Monkish study; but I dare assure any wise and sober man that HISTORICAL ANTIQUITIES do deserve and will reward the pains of any English student."—Bishop Kennett's *History of Kidlington*, 1695.

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J. M. ATKINS, "JOURNAL" OFFICE, HIGH STREET,  
AND E. M. BEAUCHAMP, MARKET PLACE.

1875.

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861.



**WELLS :**  
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TO THE  
WORSHIPFUL THE DEAN AND CHAPTER  
OF THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF SAINT ANDREW, IN WELLS,  
PATRONS OF THE VICARAGE OF SAINT CUTHBERT,

*These Historical Notes*

ARE (WITH PERMISSION)

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED, BY THEIR MOST

OBEDIENT, HUMBLE SERVANT,

THO. SEREL.





## PREFACE.

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THE following Notes on the history of the Church of St. Cuthbert, in Wells, have been collected, from time to time, in the course of casual perusals of those records connected with Wells, to which I have had opportunities of access. They are necessarily of a miscellaneous and unconnected character, and, as I have designated them, really "Notes," without in any way professing to be a History of this interesting old Church. They will, I trust, assist some other person in writing a complete history of the Church, which would be a most useful and important undertaking, for which there are abundant materials in the repositories of the Bishop, the Dean and Chapter, and the Corporation of Wells.

I take this opportunity of offering my grateful acknowledgments to F. H. Dickinson, Esq., for the many and various ways in which he has assisted and encouraged me in my undertaking; to Mr. J. T. Irvine, for advice on architectural matters, and for drawings of several of

the illustrations which accompany this work ; to the Mayor and Corporation, and the Town Clerk of Wells, for free access to the Municipal records ; to Mr. J. Webber, for the beautiful photographic view of the exterior of the Church and the new Reredos ; to H. T. Riley, Esq., M.A., of the Historical Manuscript Commission, for translations of many of the ancient Manuscripts I have used ; and to E. A. Freeman, Esq., D.C.L., of whose valued and important writings on the architectural history of the Parish Church, and the Cathedral, I have in several instances availed myself.

*Wells, Jan., 1875.*



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## Saint Cuthbert's Church.

**W**ELLS unquestionably owed its name, and much of its importance in early times, to the very remarkable Springs, or "Wells," near the eastern end of the Cathedral, now, and possibly long before any building had been erected there, known as "St. Andrew's Well;" and it is not improbable that the dedication of the Church itself may have had its origin in the previous dedication of these "Wells" to the Apostle St. Andrew. That the true reason for selecting this spot for the erection of the first edifice to be devoted to the purposes of religion may safely be attributed to those inexhaustible springs, I think no person will doubt. Many wells, like that of St. Andrew, were under the patronage of Saints. Veneration for springs, or wells, can be traced back to the earliest periods of history. Seneca, who flourished at the commencement of the Christian era, wrote "Where a spring rises, or a river flows, there should we build altars and offer sacrifices." Numerous instances are easily found where churches were built near springs; in our own county the churches of Frome, Doultling, and Axbridge, and others, may be mentioned.

There are so many fabulous tales connected with the early history of all our great religious establishments, that it is far better to avoid saying much of events about which doubt and uncertainty must always continue to exist. The traditions respecting the alleged founding, by Joseph of Arimathea, of the first Christian Church in England at Glastonbury, where the



Abbey now stands, are interesting in the extreme, though the literal truth of those traditions is doubted by many learned writers. But notwithstanding these doubts, we have the testimony of one of the highest authorities, Professor Willis, that "without crediting the tradition literally which assigns the date of the 'old church' to A. D. 63," the site of the once beautiful building, generally known as St. Joseph's Chapel, "was certainly occupied by one of the very earliest of British churches." That there was a church at Glastonbury before anything of the kind existed in Wells, is universally admitted.

Prior to the time of Ina, king of the West Saxons, the whole of Wells (including the "In-and-Out-parishes"), with most of the adjacent villages, was held by the Crown. That pious Monarch (who has been called the Nursing Father of the British Church), about A. D. 704, founded a church on the site of the present Cathedral, and dedicated it to St. Andrew. It is said that Ina's church, originally, had only four canons; but of the extent or value of the endowments, at that time, we have no certain means of judging. That Wells itself formed part of the original endowment cannot be doubted. About A. D. 905 the See of Wells was instituted, at which time Edward the Elder, the son and successor of Alfred the Great, was King.

Edward the Confessor was a great benefactor to the Church of Wells. Previous to his death (which occurred A. D. 1066), he, by his charter, confirmed all the possessions then held by the Cathedral of Wells. The first paragraph in the Schedule, or particular, of the lands, &c. referred to in this charter, is in the following words:—

"Imprimis, in territorio Wellensi quod antiquo vocabulo dicitur Tidington, et in singulis viculis ad se pertinentibus, sunt 50 mansus; hoc est, Paulesham (Polsham), Woky, Hentun, Gyrdleg (Garslade), Bledenhyth (Bleadney), and Eastun, Westbirig (Westbury), Wokyhole, and Æbbewyrth (Ebbor), Burcotan (Burcot), Middleton and other Middleton (Upper and Lower Milton), and Ættham (Walcombe), Thænne Horuingdun and other Horuingdon (East and West Horrington), and Hwete Circe (Whitchurch, in Binegar), Denrenn (Dinder), Dulcotan (Dulcote), Wælsleȝ (Wellesley), Wuormestorr (Wormister), Gelicotan (Chilcote), Bægenhangra (Binegar), Wandastray (Wanstrow), Hlytton (Litton)."

After enumerating other possessions of the Church of Wells, this document concludes thus :—

"Hæc igitur cum omnibus ad se pertinentibus, in silvis, campis, pratis, pascuis, piscariis, molendinis, ecclesiæ præfatæ, vel Episcopo, ut prædixi, confirmo, et libertatem ejus secundum antecessorum meorum statuta amplifico. Scripta est hæc charta ab eodem Gisone Episcopo jussu meo Anno Dominicæ Incarnationis MLXV. Indictione 3. 20 die mensis Maii in Regali villa Wendlesore nuncupata. Signum manus Gisonis Episcopi ✠."

The important survey made by order of William the Conqueror, usually known as "Doomsday," gives a still more minute account of the lands in Wells, held by the church there. The following is an extract (translated) from that valuable record :—

"The Bishop of Wells holds WELLS. He also held it in the time of King Edward, and gelded for fifty hides. The arable is sixty carucates. Thereof are in demesne eight hides, and there are six carucates, and six servants, and twenty villanes, and fourteen cottagers, with fifteen ploughs. There are four mills, rendering thirty shillings, and three hundred acres of meadow. Pasture three miles long, and one mile broad. Wood two miles long, and two furlongs broad; and three miles of moor. It is worth thirty pounds on the part of the Bishop."

"Of the land of the same manor the canons hold fourteen hides. There they have in demesne six carucates, and eight servants, and sixteen villanes, and twelve cottagers, with eight ploughs. There are two mills of fifty pence rent. It is worth twelve pounds."

"Of the same land of the same manor, Fastrade holds of the Bishop six hides, Richard five hides, Erneis five hides. There are in demesne six carucates, and ten servants, and seventeen villanes, and sixteen cottagers, with eleven ploughs, and two mills rendering ten shillings. Amongst them all it is worth thirteen pounds."

"Of the same land of the same manor, Fastrade holds of the Bishop two hides. Ralph two hides; these four hides are of the Bishop's demesne. There are in demesne two carucates, and three servants, and five Villanes, and five cottagers, with one plough. There is a mill of seven shillings and sixpence rent. The whole is worth seventy shillings."

"Of the same fifty hides the wife of Manasse holds two hides, but not of the Bishop. It is worth twenty shillings."

"Besides these fifty hides the Bishop has two hides which paid no geld in the time of King Edward. Alward and Edric hold them of the Bishop. They are worth 30 shillings."

This survey was completed in 1086, Giso being at that time Bishop of this diocese. His recumbent effigy may still be seen in the north aisle of the Choir in the Cathedral.

When Parishes were first known is a question about which learned men differ. Camden says they originated with Archbishop Honorius, about A. D. 630; Selden, on the contrary, asserts that the institution of parochial districts was long after that time. Other authorities attribute the setting out of parishes to Alfred the Great, who succeeded to the throne in 871, and

died in 901. Parishes are distinctly noticed as early as the laws of King Edgar, which were probably enacted about 970. It seems certain that no "Parish," as understood in modern times, existed in Wells until after the completion of the Domesday survey, as there is no notice of any such in that record. I think there cannot be much doubt that when the parish of St. Cuthbert first became known as such, a church had been built on the site of the present structure; for the setting out of bounds to a district, to be afterwards known as a parish, was one of the results of the erection of a church; because it was necessary that the parson should know the precise limits over which he had the cure of souls, and from whence his future income would be derived. The original church was no doubt dedicated to St. Cuthbert, and this dedication we may, I think, safely conclude gave the name of St. Cuthbert to the parish.

The precise date of the building of the first church of St. Cuthbert has not been clearly ascertained. Some persons are of opinion that the original building was reared before the conquest. There certainly is some reason for this, as it is scarcely likely that the Saxon St. Cuthbert would have been chosen as a patron Saint by Normans. That there was a church on the site of the present edifice soon after the commencement of the twelfth century there can be no doubt. My reasons for this opinion are, that by a charter dated Ides of August, A.D., 1246, Bishop Roger confirmed all the then possessions of the Dean and Chapter. The preface to this charter recites that Bishop Roger having looked into the muniments by which the Chapter of Wells held their several possessions by grants from Kings or other persons; for further security and confirmation, grants all their manors, lands, churches, rents, and all their possessions which they then held, the whole of which are enumerated and shortly described. Among these the church of St. Cuthbert is included, and stated to have been the gift of Robert and Joceline, Bishops of Bath and Wells, for commons; and it is added that the vicarage was in their (the Chapter's) gift, or presentation.

This charter is dated from Stawie, then said to be in the parish of Chyu (Magna). Stowey was in fact a Chapelry belonging to Chew Magna, in which place the Bishops of Bath and Wells then had a mansion. In 1281, Archbishop Peckham, by his charter, confirmed to the Dean and Chapter all the then possessions of the

Cathedral Church of Wells, and in that charter the donation of the church of St. Cuthbert is distinctly attributed to Bishop Robert.

From these facts I see no clear reason for doubting that between the years 1135, when Bishop Robert succeeded to the See of Bath and Wells, and 1165, (or 6), when he died, a parochial church dedicated to St. Cuthbert was erected on the spot where our parish church now stands, though of much smaller dimensions. This is the more readily to be believed from the character of Bishop Robert, of whom all authorities agree—that he was a skilful architect and a munificent benefactor to the church. Among other important works, he did much towards rebuilding the city of Bath, which had, to a great extent, been destroyed by fire in 1137, and finished the Abbey Church there. In Wells he substantially repaired the cathedral, which before then was in so great a state of ruin as to threaten its entire destruction. We have also the very best evidence of his favour towards the citizens of Wells, for he it was who granted to the city its first charter; a vast concession at that time, the true value of which we cannot now rightly estimate. The original charter is not known to exist, but it is recited at length in another, granted by Bishop Reginald Fitz-Jocelyne, the successor of Bishop Robert. I make no apology for giving a translation of the charter in question, and I do so, not only as an illustration of my subject, but also to prove that both Collinson and Phelps, as well as other authors, are mistaken in attributing to Bishop Reginald the credit of being the first who gave chartered privileges to this place. The charter (translated) is as follows:—

“ Robert by the grace of God Bishop of Bath. To all our faithful people, Clerks and Laymen, as well French as English, Greeting and the blessing of the Lord:— After we had attained, by the divine call and meroy, to this high summit of pontifical dignity, we laboured earnestly, purposing in mind that we ourselves should pay, and cause to be paid by others, due reverence to the rule of the church of the blessed Andrew in Wells, to Us committed; and that if any evil customs should obtain therein, to drive the same from the confines thereof, and to enlarge, as much as in Us should lie, its honour and usefulness; and it being evident to Us, by experience, that the tumult of the markets, which have hitherto been held in the same church, and the yard thereof, to the defilement and disadvantage of the said church, as well as of its ministers, who are greatly incommoded, and whose devotions are impeded, and their prayers disturbed. And in order that the supplications of the house of God may not be mingled with the chafferings of traders, We command and firmly ordain that whosoever shall come here for the purpose of trading at three festivals, that is to say, the finding of the Holy Cross, the feast of Saint Kalixtus, and the celebration of the feast of Saint Andrew, may freely and securely carry on trade in the broad streets of the same city, free from all evil customs and inquiet. And that they do not presume, at any time, to defile the said church and

the yard thereof. And we grant also by the advice of our Clerks, and ordain that all traders at the aforesaid festivals, and their vigils, shall for ever remain quit of toll, it being our will that this be established for ever, We command it by the present writing and confirm it by the impression of our seal. Witnesses, John the Dean of Wells; Reginald, the Precentor; Robert and Thomas, Archdeacons; Edward; Master Eustace; William of the Holy Faith; Ralph Martre; William Ateba; Peter of Chiu'; Walter, the Baker; and many other clerks and laymen."

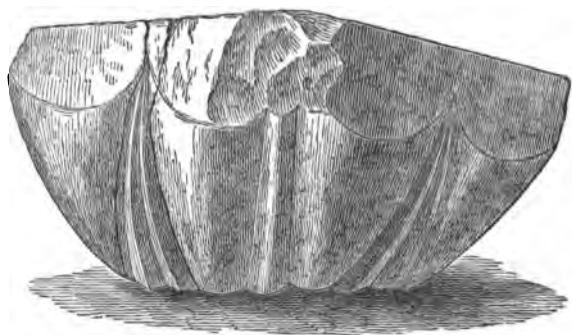
It seems certain that this charter was granted before A. D. 1159, when Ivo (or John), whose name occurs as one of the witnesses, ceased to be Dean of Wells.

It may truly be said that this Prelate caused almost a revolution in his diocese, as will be seen from what is said of him by Mr. Freeman in his recent admirable lectures on the history of the Cathedral. "With Robert a new era begins alike in architectural, capitular, and municipal matters. He was a founder in every sense. He rebuilt the fabrics of both his churches. He settled the relations between those churches as they remained till the suppression of the monastery of Bath in the sixteenth century. He gave the Chapter of Wells a new constitution, which, with some changes in detail, it still retains. Last, but not least, he gave the first charter of incorporation to the burghers who had gradually come to dwell under the shadow of the minster. He may therefore be looked upon as the founder of Wells, church and city alike, as they now stand." In a very interesting sketch of the history of our parish church, in 1863, on the occasion of the meeting of the Somerset Archæological Society, in Wells, Mr. Freeman distinctly stated that there had been a Norman Church on the site of the existing building, and adduced as evidence of his statement the discovery, in the course of late renovations in the Church, of a Norman Pillar Piscina, which may still be seen there.

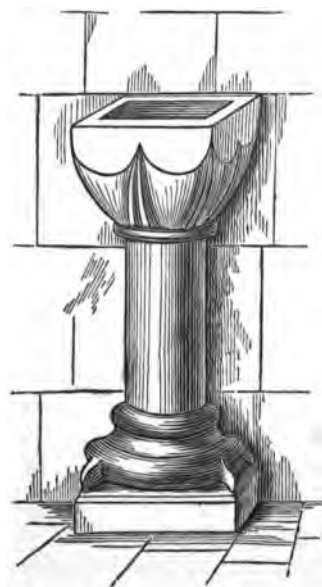
Mr. Freeman, in his further remarks, on the subsequent or second Church, added:—

"The present church dated from the thirteenth century, and might be described as a church of that age thoroughly recast by gradual changes ranging from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century. Externally the building was almost wholly perpendicular, and, on the first entering, the proportion and general effect were completely those of one of the great perpendicular churches of the county. But a second glance would show that a large part of an earlier fabric still remained, and that a large part of the recasting had been done in a very unusual way. The Early English Church was built about the time of its confirmation to the dean and chapter by Bishop Joceline in 1240. It was originally one of those large cross churches with central towers, which were known in Somersetshire by the strange and unaccountable name of "quarter cathedrals."

Leland, the Antiquary, though he noticed and has left us considerable information with reference to the Cathedral and



**THE NORMAN PILLAR-PISCINA.**



**THE PISCINA RESTORED.**



other buildings in the Town, only says a few words about the parish church:—"There is but one Paroche Chirch in Welles; but that is large, and standith in the west part of the town, and is dedicate to *Saint Cuthberte*."

The present church of St. Cuthbert is unquestionably the work of several periods. The more ancient portions, which are visible to a casual observer, are the nave-piers and arches, with parts of the exterior walls, and two windows, one in the east wall of the south transept (known as Tanner's Chapel), and another in the north wall of the "Exchequer," on the west side of and adjoining the Chapel of the Holy Trinity. Those earlier parts are Early English, and may safely be assigned to about the same date as the nave of the Cathedral. The section of the jamb of the south entrance (inner) door, agrees very closely in plan with the original jamb mould of the entrance (now built up) to the western cloister of the Cathedral, but differs somewhat from the details still preserved of St. John's Priory, which were undoubtedly of Bishop Jocelin's time. The jamb of the entrance arch of the porch is merely a rough copy of the lower arch of Jocelin's work in the Cathedral.

It is to be regretted that no authentic record has yet been found to inform us either of the exact date of the building, or who was the builder of those older portions of the present edifice. In the absence of better evidence, the consideration of a few facts connected with our parish church, contemporaneous with the time to which I have referred, will not be uninteresting, and may possibly lead others to investigate the subject with more skill and care than I have been able to bestow on it.

I have already stated that the donation or appropriation of the Church must be attributed to Bishop Robert; and suggested that he built the original parish church. Of that building nothing is now known to exist except the Norman pillar-piscina noticed by Mr. Freeman, and possibly a fragment of the wall near the south porch. The "Early English" parts of the present edifice we probably owe, directly or indirectly, to one who here first saw the light, and who in after life became one of the greatest men of his time, whether we regard him as an Ecclesiastic, as a Statesman, Patriot, or as an Architect,—I mean our own townsman, Jocelin of Wells. The precise date of his birth is not known, but it is certain that he became connected with our

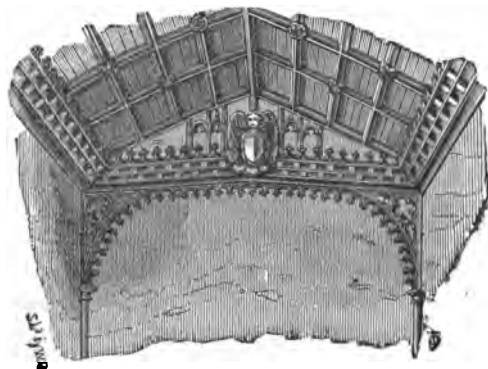


Cathedral at an early age. On the 28th May, 1204, he was consecrated Bishop of Bath and Wells, and like many others of the highest dignitaries of the Church, became as much, and probably more, engaged in State affairs, as in those appertaining to his own profession as an ecclesiastic. Jointly with his brother Hugh de Welles, Bishop of Lincoln, he founded the Priory, or Hospital, of St. John, on the site of which the new Central Schools are built; and both those eminent men took a leading part, with the other Prelates, Barons, and great men of the Kingdom, in resisting the tyrannical proceedings of King John, and in ultimately obtaining that invaluable confession of English Liberties, Magna Charta, in which the names of the two brothers prominently appear. There are several cogent reasons for assuming that to Bishop Jocelin we in some way owe the *second* Church of St. Cuthbert. Among other circumstances bearing on this subject, the following facts may be adduced. It has already been shown that he was a native of Wells, and that in 1204 he became Bishop of this Diocese. In 1240 he confirmed the Church of St. Cuthbert to the Dean and Chapter, by a charter, of which the following is a translation:—

“To all Children of Holy Mother Church to whom this present writing shall come; Jocelin, by divine mercy Bishop of Bath, Greeting in the Lord. Whereas it is known to pertain to our office to uphold, with all our strength the rights of the church, and watchfully to oversee that neither by our carelessness or negligence its rights may sustain any injury:—We have confirmed the Church of St. Cuthbert in Wells, with the appurtenances, which it has hitherto freely and peaceably possessed, to the Chapter of Wells, by our Episcopal authority; to be held by them for ever in augmentation of their Commons: SAVING a competent Vicar to the same church:—Wherefore the said Chapter of our Church shall present a fit man to us and our successors whenever there shall happen to be a vacancy. In Proof and witness whereof we have caused our seal to be affixed to this writing. GIVEN at Kingsbury, the morrow of St. German, the Bishop, by the hand of Master Walter de Magdenston, in the thirty fifth year of our pontificate.”

By another charter, Bishop Jocelin, after reciting that the income of the Church of St. Cuthbert, which had been assigned, to the Minister thereof in the time of his predecessors, was slender and insufficient, augmented it in many respects, and conferred on the church lands of considerable value, and other good things to its augmentation; and, with the consent of John Sarecin, then Dean of Wells, and the Chapter of Wells, he granted the profits and returns of the Grange for distribution of daily commons; any surplus to go to the Canons Residentiary, at the end of the year. This charter was sealed and confirmed by the Dean and Chapter in their Chapter house on the 16th November, 1242, only

three days before Bishop Jocelin's death. The church, as it now stands, as already observed, has been the work of many different hands, and of many different periods. Any attempt to assign dates to these changes and alterations must be almost entirely conjectural. In its present state, as Mr. Freeman truly observes, it has the appearance of a perpendicular structure, but a more critical examination will at once disclose the variety of its dates. The old pillars in the nave seem to have been raised to meet the requirements of the increased height of the church, the capitals being again brought into use. The original height of the church, before the addition of the perpendicular clerestory, can easily be seen, the old gable, or roof-line, having been left undisturbed in the western wall of the nave. The chief part of the alterations and additions were probably effected before the end of the fourteenth, or soon after the commencement of the fifteenth century, though much has been done since that time. The "low-pitched roof" of the nave is a singularly fine example of carpentry and carving.



Its tie-beams spring from wooden brackets, their open spandrels being elegantly carved. The oak cornice, which is continued round the nave, is ornamented with rosettes, and at regular intervals are figures of angels with open wings, each holding a book or a shield, some of which are charged with armorial bearings, and on others are hieroglyphical characters not easily described or understood. In the centre of the beams are other shields, on which are represented symbols of the Crucifixion, Masonry (the square and compasses), and on one are the arms of the old Wells family of Coward. The whole of this admirable work has been daubed

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with paint, which very seriously detracts from its original design and beauty. In the aisles the roof is plain, with oak beams, mostly in square panels, that in the south transept being much more elaborate than in the other parts, particularly several of the bosses, which are elaborately carved; one representing a Crown, forming a canopy to a Rose, is indicative of the date of this part of the church. The roof of the Chancel is a modern attempt at an imitation of the nave roof. There are distinct notices of repairs and alterations in the building, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Henry le Eyr, of Wells, made his will, January 25th, 1341, and after directing that his body should be interred in the Church-yard of St. Cuthbert, among other legacies, is the following:—(translated) “Also I leave to the building (*fabrica*) of the same church of St. Cuthbert's, one cauldron of lead.” We also learn from the Cathedral records that considerable repairs were effected in the chancel in 1481, when the Dean and Chapter appear to have incurred charges “for the spyke nayll employed for the chancell of St. Cuthbert's; for 300 lbs of lead; 6 lbs of sawder; and one sack of lime used on the chancell aforesaid.” In 1550 there is a notice in the capitular records of the receipt of 45s. 5d. for lead sold, at 1½d. per lb., to the wardens of St. Cuthbert.

The church attributed to Bishop Joceline was probably a cruciform structure, with a central tower. That there was a central tower is an unquestionable fact. If we had nothing more to guide us than the massive pillars which still stand at the eastern end of the nave, they alone would be almost conclusive on this point. But there is other evidence bearing on the subject, which places the matter beyond all doubt. In the book containing the proceedings of the Corporation of Wells, under date A.D. 1561, the following record occurs:—

“*Memorand*: That at this tyme ther is appoynted a Collec'on by the M'r of the Towne for the Newe makinge and settinge vppe the Church where the Styple did stand; and they whose [names] be vnder named and wryten appoynted Collecto's for ye same: and ther Streates and sum'es delyv'ed then for the firste paymente towards the same Buldinges:—

Highe Strete.—Will'm Linge and Will'm Smythe, Drap,' ther s'm is in that Strett, £xxxviii. xi.

Chamberleyn Strete.—Christover White, and Thomas Ludwell, Collecto's ther £iiij. iiij. viij.

Cud'bte Strete.—Edward Egill and Nicholas Instrige, Collecto's ther, the s'm £vj. iiij. viij.

Southovère.—Thomas Isaacke and Robert Chicke, Collecto's ther, the s'm is £vj. vj. iiij.

This gives a total of £55 5s. 8d.,—a large sum at that time, and sufficient to complete a considerable amount of work. Moreover, it is stated to be the “*firste paymente*,” and therefore it is clear that the reparations must have been extensive and important, rendered necessary, possibly, by the fall or removal of the central tower. The present chancel aisles seem to indicate considerable alterations and enlargements made towards the close of the fourteenth century, as may be seen by comparing the sections of the arches between the transepts and nave with those between the transepts and chancel arches. The piscina and sedilia in the chancel are probably of this date.

The precise date of the erection of the present tower has not been ascertained, but it probably preceded the raising of the nave and the addition of the roof. An original inventory, or account, of ornaments and articles belonging to the church, then in the custody of the churchwardens, under date 9 Henry VI. (A. D. 1430), affords a clue to the real age of the tower. The account in question, after enumerating divers other articles, contains the following items; “Also two rings given towards mending the Cross. And they (the Wardens) answer for six rings *given towards the new tower*, one of which is of gold.” The new tower here referred to is undoubtedly the existing tower, which, it is not improbable, was then approaching completion.

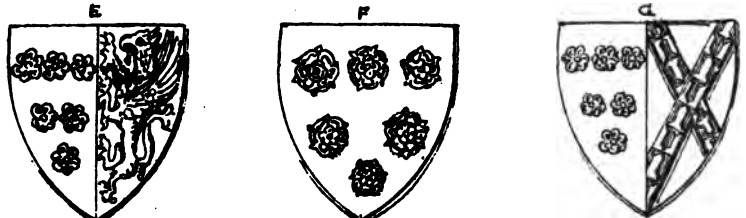
And here I again appeal to Mr. Freeman’s opinion on the character of this tower. After speaking of the want of documentary evidence as to the date of its erection, he says that he placed St. Cuthbert’s in the first rank of towers, giving Wrington the pre-eminence, and allotting that of St. Cuthbert a secondary place in the rank; and concludes with these expressive words: “still, there could be no doubt that it was, in its general effect, one of the noblest towers in Somersetshire, and therefore one of the noblest towers in England.” Thus this beautiful example of church architecture may safely be said to be almost without a rival in the West of England, a district proverbial for its church towers.

In the western front of the tower, is a window, of large dimensions, filled with tracery. On each side of this window, near its base, is a niche, now empty, under which is a shield, charged with armorial bearings, slightly obliterated. Over the window are three other niches, also empty, that in the centre being

larger than the others. These niches possibly contained the figures of the Saviour, the Virgin, and St. John. The shield towards the south is charged with six roses, 3, 2, and 1; [*Palton*]. impaling three torteaux, over all a label of three points [*Courtenay*]. The other shield is also charged with the six roses, impaling a Griffin Segreant. [*Botreaux*]. The first of these shields has the bearing of a Palton married to a Courtenay; the second that of another Palton (probably the brother and successor of the first named Palton) married to a Botreaux. From evidence found in other armorial bearings in the old manor house at Croscombe, coupled with, and partially explained by documentary accounts, we know that the last-named Palton married, secondly, a lady of the Wilington family as early as 1411-12. It is therefore probable that the lower part of the tower of St. Cuthbert must have been erected before 1411, and possibly begun not much earlier than 1400. That the persons, or some of them, whose arms are represented in these shields, were in some important degree, benefactors to the church, and probably built, or provided means towards building the tower, cannot, I think, admit of any reasonable doubt.

The family of Palton was connected with this locality from an early date. The name is derived from Paulton, in this county. Sir John Palton (according to *Collinson*) lived in the time of Edward III. (1327-1377), and his descendants continued to live at Paulton until 28 Henry VI. (1450), when the name ended in two females, cousins and co-heiresses of William de Palton, the last male heir. John de Palton was Sheriff of Somerset and Dorset 1352-1354. The Paltons were well known in Wells. Persons of that name are frequently mentioned as witnesses in Wells deeds. Nicholas de Palton occurs in documents 1315, 1316, 1335, and 1340. John de Palton 1325, 1335, and 1336. Walter de Palton in 1316. *Collinson* and *Phelps* both give us some particulars of the family, particularly of Sir William Palton, who held the manor and hamlet of East Horrington of the Bishop of Bath and Wells in the time of Henry VI. (1422-1460), by the service of a Knight's fee. The hamlet of Dulcote was also held in the same way, and both these manors and hamlets were in 1487, assigned and settled by Bishop Robert Stillington on a Guild or Fraternity at Croscombe, to which it remained annexed until the dissolution of all such

A  
South side



E.F.G. Shields placed thus on a Stone bracket in old Manor House.



establishments, at or soon after the Reformation. In *Collinson's* and *Phelps's* account of Croscombe, it appears that "28th Henry VI. (1449), Sir William Palton, Knt., held the manor and advowson of the church, together with eight messuages and sixty acres of land, of Edward, Duke of Somerset, as of his manor of Curry Mallet;" and *Phelps* tells us that "the manorial house stood on the north side of the Church." When he wrote (1839) this manor house had been sold and converted into a chapel, to which use it has been continued ever since. This house was the manorial mansion of the Paltons, and built by one of that family. Now it is a remarkable and most interesting fact, that there are very strong reasons for assuming that the same persons who built, or contributed towards building, the tower of St. Cuthbert, also contributed largely to the erection of the church of Croscombe. In the roof of this church are to be seen, on the north side, the arms of Palton alone, on one shield, and directly opposite on the other side, on another shield, the arms of Botreaux; and there is additional evidence (already referred to) of the connection I have suggested in the old manor house at Croscombe, where there are three shields on a stone bracket inserted in the south wall, the centre shield charged with the arms of Palton alone, on the left side Palton impaling Botreaux, and on the right Palton impaling Wilington — (*Gules, Saltier vair*). I have not been enabled to obtain the name of the lady of the Courtenay family, but it is certain that the Courtnays were allied with several Somersetshire families, and from 1410 to 1413 Richard Courtenay was Dean of Wells. I may also say that Isabel, daughter of Nicholas de Moels, and his wife Margaret, daughter of Hugh Courtenay, married Sir William Botreaux, who died 33 Edward III (1358) and left a son married to Elizabeth, daughter of Ralph Daubeney, who built the church of North Cadbury. They also held considerable possessions in Somersetshire, including the manors of Crewkerne, Wootton Courtenay, and other large estates. John de Courtenay and Hugh de Courtenay occur as two of the chief possessors of land in this county, in the time of Edward I. The connection between the families of Wilington and Palton is noticed by *Collinson* in his history of the parish of Brompton Ralph, where it is said that Sir John Wilington died possessed of that manor 20 Richard II.



(1396), leaving a son of his own name, who dying 13 Henry IV. (1411), left issue, Elizabeth, wife of Sir John Palton, Knt., who died possessed of the manor in her right, 28 Henry VI. (1449). In *Collinson's* history of the parish of North Petherton, it is said that Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Wrothe, by Margaret, daughter of Sir John Wilington, Knt., also married Sir John Palton, Knt., and died without issue. His second wife was probably the Elizabeth Wilington above named. The family of Botreaux also had extensive possessions in Somersetshire, including the manors of Standerwick, Cheddar, and Shipham, all of which, with other large estates, were settled by William Lord Botreaux, in 1426, on his daughter Anne, on the occasion of her marriage with Sir John Stafford. William de Botreaux's name is included among those of the great landowners and men of note in the reign of Edward I.

The shields in the tower St. Cuthbert's church are enclosed in quatrefoils of a decorated character. The retention of this shape seems to be a curious local peculiarity, being found also in the stained glass of Bishop Bubwith's library, over the eastern cloister of the cathedral, and in a fragment of stained glass remaining, 1871, in the north aisle of the church at Dinder. These quatrefoils have led some persons to the conclusion that the shields may be of earlier date than they really are, but the instances adduced where a similar style has been followed, and in one of which the date is with certainty known (Bubwith's library), leaves little or no room to doubt the actual date of the two shields in question.

The recent removal of a very ugly organ gallery, constructed of wood, of comparatively modern date, and the destruction of an adjoining apartment used as a place of meeting for parish vestries, has opened a clear and uninterrupted view of the interior of the church from the eastern to the western end, and exhibits to great advantage the stately panelled tower arch, as well as the vaulting of the tower itself.

Much more may be said in connection with the church and tower, if minute details were necessary. The accompanying illustrations will convey a much more correct idea of the character and present state of the exterior of the entire edifice than can be given in any other manner.

The appropriation of the church of St. Cuthbert to the Dean

and Chapter of Wells has already been noticed, and it has always been held by that body, except during the time of Cromwell, when deans and chapters ceased to exist. Many changes in church affairs, and church property occurred at, and subsequent to the Reformation. In 1547 Dean Fitzwilliams surrendered the Deanery to the King, (Edward VI.), and soon afterward a special Act of Parliament was passed for re-constituting it. These proceedings caused serious doubts as to the title of the Dean and Chapter to their privileges and possessions, and at length it was deemed necessary to apply to Queen Elizabeth for a new charter of incorporation, which was obtained in 1592. By that Charter the church of St. Cuthbert, (with others), was re-granted and confirmed to the Dean and Chapter and their successors, together with certain pensions or sums to be paid by the vicar, for the time being. These pensions consist of annual payments of £20, £13 6s. 8d., and 13s. 4d., all of which will be noticed again in another part of this work.

### ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION.

The jurisdiction of the Dean and Chapter in the parish of St. Cuthbert was originally independent of the Bishop; but this privilege was challenged on several occasions, and caused many and serious controversies between the chief dignitaries of the Cathedral. At length Bishop Joceline de Welles attempted to bring about a settlement of these unseemly disputes, and for that purpose he granted a charter, or award, of which the following is a translation :

“To all the faithful in Christ to whom this present writing shall come. Joscelyn by the grace of God Bishop of Bath, Greeting :—Know all of you that a dispute having arisen between our beloved sons W[illiam] the Dean, and H the Sub-Dean of Wells, touching the jurisdiction of the City and suburbs of Wells, which has, with the unanimous consent of the parties, been referred to us for settlement :—It is thus decided,—that is to say—That whenever the Dean of Wells for the time being, shall be present (in residence), he shall have the cognizance and decision of causes, but the Dean being absent, and the Sub-Dean present, the Sub-Dean shall have the cognizance of the said causes ; but if it shall happen that both are absent, then the power of giving judgment shall remain with the Dean : But of the household servants of ourselves, and our successors, for the time being, it shall be as follows ;—the Bishop for the time being, or his official, or he to whom their powers in this respect may have been assigned, may determine these causes in the presence of the persons [interested], the practice of the King's Court being always followed :— Nevertheless, if a money fine shall happen to be imposed upon any person of the city, or the suburbs, who may be immediately under us, or our successors, for the time being ; that money fine shall be applied to the use of the fabric of the Church of Wells, without any diminution or deduction whatsoever :

Of the other profits of the jurisdiction of the said City and suburbs, each of them [the Dean and Sub-Dean] shall receive any fine which may be imposed during the period of his jurisdiction, or that of his delegate, the stipend of the common Apparitor being deducted therefrom, in proportion to the amount of such fines which either of them shall receive: Also they shall keep a common Roll of judgments which each of them shall keep by turns during his period of jurisdiction. In proof and witness whereof, we the said W. the Dean, and H. the Sub-dean, and the Chapter of Wells, have affixed our seals. Done at Wells, the morrow of the Apostles Philip and James, in the thirty-first year of our pontificate. [2nd May, 1237].

In 1321 the controversy was renewed between Bishop Drovensford, and John Godele, the then Dean, and the Chapter. The differences were ultimately settled,—the Bishop recognizing the jurisdiction of the Dean and Chapter, and excluding himself and his successors from future meddling therewith, unless in causes of appeal, or complaint, or grievance. This arrangement was evidenced by two instruments, one dated at the Temple, London, 9th August, 1321; and the other at Wells, the 18th January, 1321. Another dispute occurred on the same subject between the Dean and Chapter and Bishop Ralph de Salopia, which ended in a renewed recognition of the jurisdiction of the Dean and Chapter.

The spiritual jurisdiction, in more modern times, underwent some alterations. For a long period prior to 1847 the Dean had jurisdiction over the Out-parish, but the Bishop had spiritual authority in the In-parish. In 1847, all "peculiar" jurisdictions belonging to the Dean, were abolished by the Act of 10 and 11 Vict. Chap. 98; and by that Statute the sole jurisdiction over both parishes was (and is now) vested in the Bishop, who, as Ordinary, holds a Visitation for St. Cuthbert every third year, and in the other two years Visitations are held by the Arch-deacon of Wells.





## Chuntries and Altars.

**C**HANTRIES were designed for Priests to pray and chant masses for the souls of the founders, their friends, and benefactors, as well as for the King who had licensed the foundation. They were generally more or less endowed, the revenues being mostly applied in payment of the stipends of the priests for the duties they had to perform; and the bodies of the founders were often buried in or near their chantry chapels. Private masses were not permitted to be celebrated at the High Altar, and this was one of the causes for the founding of small chantry chapels, of which many exist in churches at this time, though they were suppressed, and the majority of them were demolished at, or soon after, the Reformation. Priests, not beneficed, were generally preferred for these chantry chapels, because they could devote more of their time to the performance of the duties they undertook to do. It often happened that several chantries were founded at the same altar and in the same chapel. These chantries vastly increased within the 150 or 200 years which preceded the Reformation, from the facilities given for evading the law of Mortmain by means of royal licenses, from which the King derived a considerable revenue.

The precise number of Chantries and Altars in the Church of St. Cuthbert, I cannot take upon myself to determine, but I have found distinct notices in the city records, of altars with the following dedications:—

The B. V. Mary (two); The Holy Trinity; St. John; St. Peter; St. Paul; St. Michael; St. Cuthbert; St. Erasmus;

St. Nicholas; St. Catherine; St. Anne; St. George; St. Ethelred; The Holy Cross; St. Saviour.

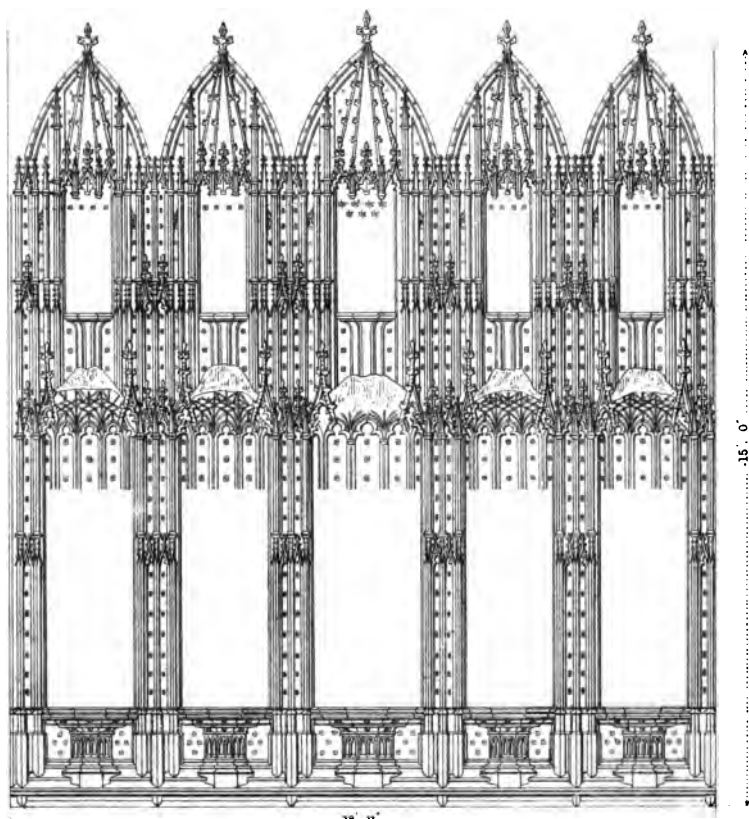
The Altar of Holy Trinity is more frequently noticed in the city records, than any other in the church. The chapel is on the west side of the north transept, and is still called the "Trinity Chapel." The unusual connection between the Corporation of Wells, and the church of St. Cuthbert, from a very remote period, will be noticed hereafter. In 1497 an ordinance was made by the Corporate body that the wax candles used in the creation of Burgesses (at that time evidently a ceremony partaking of a religious character) should in future be given to the "Gilde of the Holy Trinity." In 1554 another ordinance was made that every burgess that refused "to pay yerely,—quart'ly—one peny; or ells fourpence at the yer ende, to the Wardens of the Trinite for the tyme beyng at ther acompte, for the whiche ther is dayly one seculer P'ste syngyng for theyre good estate, and for the sowles of theyre frendes dep'ted," should be "discomyn'd," *i.e.*, deprived of the freedom and privileges of the city. This was during the reign of Queen Mary.

The connection between the Corporation and the Trinity altar seems to have been of a very close and intimate nature. The Wardens were usually associated with the corporate body when new local statutes were to be enacted. This will appear by the following extract from the Municipal acts in 1540, when an ordinance was recorded to the following effect:—

"At this hall of Convocaçon hit is agreed, ordeyned, made and enacted, that John Godwyn, Maist'r (Mayor) of the Cite of Wells, gent., John Cut, John Wills, and Robert Phillips, late Maisters of the same cite, John Mawdley, gent., Rob't Beck'm, auditor, Richard Browne, and Thomas Lewis, constables, *the Trinite wardaynes for the tyme beyng*, John Godwyn, th'onger, Alexander Bosgrove, Thomas Attwell, and Richard Frempton, to be of the chief counsell of the same cite, and they at any convocaçon, or congregaçon, or hall, shall eyther in ther com'on hall, or checker house, by the M'r (Mayor), for the tyme beyng, comanded, p'ysed, and by the towne clerke, or his depute, sufficiently monyshed, and warned, by the space of thre dayes, to make, ordeyne, and enact any statute, ordin'ce, or decree, laudable and welthy by them thowte for the com'on welthe of the saide cite; and all such statutes, ordin'ces and decrees by them so made heraft' to be of full power and auctoryte and strength; and yf any of the said p'sons at any such convocaçon, congregaçon, or hall, in man'er above written, comanded, p'ysed, and warned, make defalte and come not, we wyll that vi. of the p'sons with the M'r of the towne for the tyme beyng, so ther beyng p'sent, the resydew so contumal absent, shall make, ordeyn and enact any statute, ordin'ce and decree lawdable and welthy by them thowte for the said com'on welth; and all such statutes, ordin'ces and orders by them so made hereafter, to be of like power, auctoryte, and strength as above written."

Another instance of the importance of the Trinity Altar is





F.I. Dollman, del.

15' 11"

ELEVATION OF REREDOS  
AT EAST END OF LADYE CHAPEL  
ST. CUTHBERT'S CHURCH, WELLS, SOMERSET.

SCALE OF 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 FEET

found in the oath taken by every burges in 1553, on being admitted to his freedom, which was as follows :—

"I shall faith and trougth bere to the *King and Quene's Ma'tie*, Quene *Mary*, and true be to the Masters and Burges of the Cite of Welles, and the Cite helpe wt. my goodes and Catall to my powre, and truelye the vsages of the place maynteyne and susteyne, and my Brother worshipp as he is worthy : and to the 'Semly come when I am sompnyd and may come ; and also the counsail of the placehold and kepe, and Burum and obedyent be to the Maist'r in Words and dede at all tymes, *and a Brother be to the Gylde of the Blessyd Trinite, quarterly pay'n a peny as other Burges do*, and truely my tyne pay,—Soe helpe me God and halydome, and by the holy Ev'ngelist."

NOTE.—The words in italics are erased in the original oath. The name "*Mary*" is struck through, and the name "*Elizabeth*" substituted for it.

These several examples occurred at or soon after the Reformation, and were probably only revivals of ancient custom,

In 1561, the following ordinance occurs :

"Wheras of olde yt was accustomed that the M'r of the Towne and the xxiiij, together wyth the burgeses, did pay yerelye vnto the Trynitie Altar: eech M'r, and the xxiiij, viijd. ; and ev' y Burges iiijd. :—It is now ordeyned by the seyd M'r and Burgeses, that the sayed yerlye pençons, or annytes, shall be by two of the sayed xxiiij, yerlye collected and gathered ; to be disposed by the M'r of the Towne and hys brethren in almes, as to theyre dyscrecyons shal seeme moste mete and expedyent, and moste especyally to the poor burgeses of thys Towne."

This was in the early days of Queen Elizabeth, and was one of the results of changes then being effected.

Penalties for offences against the municipal laws of the city were often ordered to be paid to the Wardens of the Trinity Altar. The Corporation also examined and audited the accounts of the Wardens of several if not all the Chantries in the church, including that of the Holy Trinity, as will be seen from the following extract from the City records, under date 1507 :—

It was ordeyned and stratelye comanded that ev' y Burges that hath occupied the office of Wardenship of the Trynitye, that they and ev'ryche of hem brynge to the Mayster (Mayor) and his brethrene the arrearages of theyre acomptes athyr halfe the Feste of Midsummer nexte ensewinge, vpon peyne of discompyne."

The Chantry Chapel of the Holy Trinity is undoubtedly an addition made to the Church after the erection of the transept. This is evidenced by the difference in the style of the building, and by the window in the western wall of the transept, and the small windows, or slits, in the eastern wall of the ancient exchequer, or treasure-house of the church.

The Altar in the north transept, on the east side of, and adjoining the Trinity Chapel, was dedicated to the B.V. Mary and is usually designated "the Ladye Chapel." The beautiful reredos in this chapel is of earlier date, and more elaborate and elegant in its design, than that in the South transept. Both these



reredos were discovered in 1848 by Mr. Henry Powell, the then churchwarden, in the course of renovations effected by him at that time. The Reformation Vandals denuded these elaborate works of art of nearly all their original beauty by turning the sculptured statues out of their niches, breaking them into pieces, and returning the fragments into their former positions so as to fill up the spaces, finishing their barbarous work by chopping off the projecting sculptured ornaments, and then concealing the whole by thick coats of plaster, giving it the appearance of a solid wall. In the reredos in the chapel in the north transept, there were two tiers of niches, five in each. The centre niche in the lower tier was of larger dimensions than any of the others, and probably contained a figure of the Saviour. The reredos in the chapel in the south transept, though not so elaborate in its details as the other, was a most beautiful example of mediæval sculpture. It was erected in 1470, at the cost of the corporation; another instance of the close connection of that body with the parish church. The contract for building it is enrolled in the municipal records, and the following is a copy of it:—

*"Here Begynneth the endenture bytwixt Maister William Vowell, Maister of Towne of Wellis, William Stekilpath and Thom's Coorsett of the one p'tye, chosen Wardaynes for our lady Awter, And John Stowell, freemason of the other p'tye, for the making of the fronte of the Jesse atte our lady Awter, at Seynt Cuthbertus Church in Wellis aforesaide.*

*"This Endenture' at Wellis in the Schire of Som't the xxv day of febr,' the yer' of our lord mcccclxx and the yer of King Harr' the vi from the bygynnyng xlix bytwene Maister William Vowell Maister of the Cite of Wellis, William Stekilpath and Thom's Coorset, Wardeynes of our lady Awter in the Church of Seynt Cuthbert in Wellis forseid on yat oon p'tie And John Stowell of Wellis foresaide, freemason, on that other p'tie. Witnesseth that the saide John Stowell hath take to make, and shall make or do to be made, wel sufficiently and werkmanly and pleynorly p'forme and within xvi monythes next suyng the dat' of this endenture all the werkmanship and masonry crafte of a fronte Innyng to the Awter of our lady within the Church of Seynt Cuthbert of Wellis forsaide in the South yle of the same, the which front shal extend in brede from the koyne of the Arch beyng in the north party of the said awter into the Angill beyng in the south side of the Awter forsaide. Also the said fronte shal A Rise in heith from the growdyng of the said Awter vnto the Wal plate of the yle foresaide, or ellis litel tak so as it may most conveniently bep'porcened and most stablisht. In which fronte shal stande three stagis of Imagery acordyng to the genelogy of our lady with there basynges hovelis and tabernaclis well and werkmanly made & wrought. Ther shal also arise from the basynges of the saide fronte bytwene Image and Image Coorses wel and werkmanly wrought, trayles rennyng in the said coorses. acordyng to the werkes foresaid, with two wyngis comyng out from the saide fronte after the brede of the Awter freitht with Imagery, such as can be thought by the Maister and his Brothers most acordyng to the storye of the said fronte. In the lowist p'tie of the which stagis shal be a Jesse;—the whych Jesse shal lynally runne from Image to Image through alle ye foresaid fronte, and coorses as werkmanly as it canne be wrought: To all the which werkes and businesse the foresaide John Stowell shal fynde or do fynde alle man of stuffe, as wel freeston,*

fair and p'fitable, as rough ston, lyme, sonde, Iryn, ledde, and scafote tymb,' and alle other stuffe necessar' to ye saide werkes to be had, for the which workmanship and stuffe, as it is above writt, the foresaid John Stowell shal have and receyve of the saide Maister or Wardynes, or of ther deputes xli. in goode & lawful money of ynglond, in such wise, and at such tyme as it sayth hereafter; first, at the sealyng of this indenture xls.; and after yat wekely, as it may be vnderstand that the werke goith forth. Alle the residewe to be paide atte the ende of the foresaid werkes, sayve allowey before that the saide Maister and Wardynes have remayning in ther hands tyl the foresaide werkes be p'fectly ended es. For alle the which covenants wel and trewly to be p'formed the said John Stowell byndeth hymselfe his eyris, and his executors by obligacon in xxi. to be paide to the saide M' William Vowell or to [his] assignes, if so be it that the saide John breke any of the Covenants foresaide.

"In Witnesse wherof ye parties foresaid have put ther seales, &c."

As will have been inferred from the language of the curious document just quoted, this reredos, in its perfect state, was intended to represent the genealogy of our Blessed Saviour. At the base of the reredos was a life-size recumbent figure of Jesse, sculptured in freestone, from which a kind of branch, or stem, ran through each tier of the niches above. The figure of "Jesse" can still easily be traced, those portions only which projected beyond the surface of the wall having been chopped off. Much of the vine-like sculptured ornamental work on the divisions of the niches also remains.

It is certain that there was an altar dedicated to the B. V. Mary existing in this chapel long before the erection of the reredos there. Of this we have abundant evidence in the city records, an example of which in the following grant (translated) is here given:—

"Know all men present and to come, that I, John the Roper burgess of Wells, have given, granted, and by this my present deed confirmed to William Atte Wode, and John Mareys, Keepers of the fraternity of the Blessed Mary, of the Church of Saint Cuthbert at Wells, and to their brethren, and their successors for ever, six shillings and eightpence of annual rent issuing from a certain messuage and curtilage to the same adjoining, which Philip Wylmot holds of me for the term of his life, in Wells aforesaid, on the south side of the road which leads to Touker Street, which is situate between the tenement of Benedict Boke, on the east, and the tenement which was of Edith the Salter on the west. To have and to hold the aforesaid 6s. 8d. of annual rent issuing from the messuage and curtilage aforesaid, with the reversion of the said messuage and curtilage to accrue to the aforesaid William and John, their brethren and successors for ever, of the chief Lord of the fee, by the service therefore due and of right accustomed. Which said messuage with the curtilage and all its appurtenances, after the death of the said Philip ought to revert, shall remain to the aforesaid William and John, keepers aforesaid, and to their brethren and successors for ever. To hold in capite of the Lord, &c., and I the aforesaid John the Roper and my heirs, the aforesaid six shillings and eightpence annual rent, issuing from the messuage and curtilage aforesaid, together with the reversion of the said messuage and curtilage when it shall accrue as aforesaid, to the aforesaid keepers and their brethren and successors against all men will warrant, acquit, and forever depend. In testimony whereof my seal is affixed to these presents,—these being witnesses,—Nicholas

de Cristesham, Henry Boudyoh, Thomas de Mertok, Richard Stawye, Thomas Phillips, John Smoggle, Richard Ferrors, and others. Dated at Wells on Thursday next after the Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord, in the 46th year of the reign of King Edward the Third after the Conquest [1371]."

Some years after this a Chantry was founded before this altar by a citizen of Wells, named Thomas Tanner, who died in November 1451, and, by his will, provided for its endowment. By his marriage with a daughter of Walter Towker, another wealthy citizen (who represented the city in Parliament on several occasions), he inherited a large property here, and must have been a man of great social influence, which is evidenced by the fact that he filled the office of Mayor in 1374, 1379, 1386, 1392, 1395, and 1400. The will of the testator I have not found, but it is probable that the larger portion, if not all his landed property became vested in his trustees, under the following (translated) death-bed disposition and grant:

"Know all present and to come, that I Thomas Tannere, of Welles, have given, granted, and by this, my present charter, have confirmed unto John Wykyng, John Brown, and John Welyngtone, Chaplain, All my lands and tenements, rents, services, and reversions, which I have in the Vill and borough of Welles. I have also given and granted unto the aforesaid John, John, and John, all those lands and tenements, closes, meadows, fields, and pastures, with their appurtenances, which I have lately had of the gift and feoffment of Thomas de Mertok, in Cokesleigh, within the Hundred of Welles Forum. I have also given and granted unto the aforesaid John, John, and John, all those lands and tenements, woods, closes, meadows, fields, and pastures, with all their appurtenances, which I have in Ebbeworthe (Ebbor), and La Hope, within the hundred aforesaid. I have also given and granted unto the aforesaid John, John, and John, all that tenement with all of its appurtenances, which I lately had of the gift and feoffment of Stephen Skynnere, of Welles, and which formerly belonged to Adam Frankeleyn, in Miltone, near Welles, within the hundred aforesaid. I have also given and granted unto the aforesaid John, John, and John, all those lands and tenements, rents, services, and reversions, closes, meadows, fields and pastures, with all their appurtenances, which I lately had of the gift and feoffment of Edward Draycote, in the parish of Woky, within the hundred aforesaid. I have also given and granted unto the aforesaid John, John, and John, all those lands and tenements, rents, services, and reversions, closes, meadows, fields, and pastures, with all their appurtenances, which I lately had of the gift and feoffment of John Knyghts of Chiwton, in the parish of Woky aforesaid, and within the hundred aforesaid:—To have and to hold all the aforesaid lands and tenements, rents, services, and reversions, closes, meadows, fields, and pastures, as well within the borough of Wells aforesaid, as within the hundred of Wells Forum aforesaid, together with all their rights, liberties, and appurtenances whatsoever, unto the aforesaid John Wykyng, John Brown, and Sir John Welyngtone, Chaplain, their heirs and assigns, forever, of the chief lords of those fees, by the services due and of right accustomed for the same: And I the aforesaid Thomas Tannere and my heirs will warrant, acquit, and defend all the aforesaid lands and tenements, rents, services, and reversions, closes, meadows, fields and pastures, with all their rights, liberties, and appurtenances whatsoever, as is above mentioned, unto the aforesaid John Wykyng, John Brown, and John Welyngtone, Chaplain, their heirs [and] assigns, against all persons for ever. In witness of which thing to this my present charter I have set my seal;—These being witnesses, hereto, John Blyke, Thomas Hore, Roger Chepman, burgesses of Wells, John Goundenham,

William Nytre, John Atte Chappel, John Pynchard, and others. Given at Welles, on Tuesday the Feast of St. Cecelia the Virgin, [22 November] in the third year of the reign of King Henry, after the Conquest, the Fourth [A. D. 1401]

For legalising this endowment of his Chantry, the usual license in Mortmain was obtained from Henry IV., the date of which is 12th October, in the fourth year of that King's reign, and for which fifty marks were paid. The original document has appended to it the Great Seal, and it is endorsed with the following memorandum;—"Exhibited at the Royal Visitation, 3 September, 1537." This license enabled the Trustees and Executors named in the founder's will to make the necessary grant, of which the following is a translation from the Latin original:—

To all the faithful in Christ who this present charter quadrupartite shall see or hear. John Wykyng, John Brown, and John Wellyngtone, Chaplain, greeting in the Lord. Know ye that with the leave of our Lord Henry, King of England, after the Conquest the Fourth, given at Westminster on the 12th day of October in the 4th year of his reign, we have given and granted, and by this our present charter quadrupartite have confirmed unto Richard Groos, Master or Warden of the Commonalty of the borough of Wells, and unto the Commonalty of the same place, and their successors for ever, Two messuages and two shops, with the appurtenances in Wells, whereof one messuage is situate in the south side of High Street of the Vill aforesaid, between the messuage of Edward Draycote on the east side, and the messuage which John Tannere and Isabella his wife now hold for their lives on the west side; the other messuage being situate between the aforesaid messuage which the before named John Tannere and Isabella his wife had, on the east side, and the messuage of the Vicars of the New Close at Wells, which John Stokes, Taverner, [or Innkeeper] holds on the west side, (now the Somerset Hotel): And the aforesaid two shops are situate together on the north side of the same High street, between the messuage of Agnes Kynges, near Gropelane, on the east side, and the messuage of William Draycote, of Bristol, on the west side. We have given also and granted unto the same Master and Commonalty and their successors for ever four marks of yearly rent, issuing from the aforesaid messuage which the before named John Tannere and Isabella his wife now hold in the same Vill, together with the reversion of the aforesaid messuage, with the appurtenances when it shall fall in. To have and to hold all the aforesaid messuages, shops, rent, and reversions, together with all their appurtenances, unto the aforesaid Master and Commonalty and their successors for ever, of the chief lords of those fees by the services due and of right accustomed for the same; that so the same Master and Commonalty and to their successors for ever shall find one secular Chaplain by us the before named John Wykyng, John Brown, and John Wellyngton, Chaplain, so long as we shall live, and, after our decease by the Master of the Commonalty aforesaid for ever for the time being, with the consent of the same Commonalty, unto a certain Chantry newly by us, with God's help to be begun and founded, to be nominated, instituted and inducted; therein to celebrate divine service in the parish church of Saint Cuthbert at Welles, at the Altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary there built, at fitting hours for ever, for the healthful state of our Lord the King, and of Isabella, late wife of Thomas Tannere, of Welles, so long as she shall live, and for the soul of the before named Thomas Tannere, and for the souls of John and Agnes, parents of the said Thomas, and for the soul of the before named Isabella when she shall have departed this life, and for the souls of Walter and Christina, parents of the same Isabella, and of all their benefactors and friends, and of all the faithful deceased, from henceforth daily for ever; and also to do certain other works of charity, according to our ordinance in manner below set forth, in the Church of

Saint Cuthbert aforesaid. And the said Master and Commonalty and their successors for ever, at Welles, shall pay thereout, in the parish church aforesaid, unto the said Chaplain and his successors yearly for ever, celebrating divine service daily in the said church of Saint Cuthbert, eight marks of silver at the four common and usual terms in the year, in equal portions, for the maintenance and finding of the said Chaplain according to our ordinance, in the following form to be carried out. By which ordinance we do ordain that after the first finding and providing of the Missal, Chalice, Vestments, and all other ornaments necessary for the said Chantry by us to be done, the aforesaid Master and Commonalty shall support and maintain such Missal, Chalice, Vestments, and all other ornaments sufficient and becoming that shall for the same Chantry be necessary, for ever at their own proper costs. But the aforesaid Chaplain and his successors shall find bread, wine, and light for celebrating divine service at their own proper costs for ever. And the Master and Commonalty aforesaid shall keep and perform in every year for ever, upon the Feast of St. Katherine the Virgin, the anniversary of the before named Thomas Tannere and Isabella his wife, when she shall have departed this life, and of all the persons whose names are above written; on the day of which anniversary they shall distribute for ever among the poor of Christ in the parish church aforesaid, sixty shillings in bread, and to the Vicar of the church aforesaid sixpence, and to every other Chaplain in the same church serving and celebrating, and present at such obsequies and at Mass, fourpence; to the three clerks of the same church, for ringing the bell upon the same anniversary, to each of them, twopence: to the crier or "bedeman" of the same Vill, who shall cry the said anniversary in the Vill, twopence; and to the Master of the Commonalty aforesaid, for the time being, every year, for his trouble in overseeing that all things aforesaid are properly done, six shillings and eightpence of silver; provided always that upon the said day of anniversary he shall cause the present charter publicly to be read in the church aforesaid yearly for ever, and this our ordinance well and faithfully in all things to be observed; and if otherwise, he shall receive nothing, but the aforesaid six shillings and eightpence shall for that turn be applied to the repair of the said church of Saint Cuthbert. And if the aforesaid Master and Commonalty and their successors shall at any time in future be negligent or remiss in making payment of the said eight marks unto the aforesaid Chaplain, as before stated, or in the other charges aforesaid, or any of them, but shall be in part or wholly in arrears for one month, then it shall be fully lawful for us, our heirs and assigns, and the Chaplain aforesaid for the time being, and his successors, and each of us for himself, to enter into all the messuages and shops aforesaid, distrain, and the distresses with us to retain, and the said Master and Commonalty and their successors and their tenants to expel therefrom, without gainsaying of anyone, until full satisfaction shall have been made as to all arrears of the charges aforesaid, together with damages and costs, according to the ordinance of us, our heirs, and the Chaplain aforesaid, for the time being. Provided that so often as it shall happen that the said Chantry shall in any way be vacant, it shall then be lawful for the aforesaid Master to induct and institute into the said Chantry another Chaplain, in manners and knowledge skilled and fitting, in place of the Chaplain who before held the said Chantry, in manner before stated: solemn and corporal oath, however, being first made by him as to making personal residence continually in the said Chantry, and that he will not hold any ecclesiastical benefice, with cure, or without cure, without resigning the said Chantry within one month after the benefice being so obtained, nor will serve in the office of parish priest, or any other priestly office beyond eight days, nor will receive, celebrate, or allow of, any annual or annuals. And if it shall happen that the aforesaid Master, or his successors are negligent in making nomination, provision, institution, or induction of the said Chaplain into the Chantry aforesaid, and provide no Chaplain within one month after the time of such vacancy becoming known to them, for the said Chantry, then we do will and ordain for us and our heirs, that the Prior and Convent of Henton, of the Carthusian order, in the Diocese of Bath and Wells, shall nominate and assign unto the aforesaid Master some fit Chaplain for the said Chantry for that turn, by the same Master into the same to be inducted and instituted, as before stated; the solemn oath aforesaid being first [made] however by such Chaplain of and upon the articles above expressed; without which oath we do will that no chaplain shall have any title to the

said Chantry. And if the aforesaid chaplain shall be publicly and continually incontinent, or in any other manner whatever criminal, and shall be convicted of the same, then it shall be fully lawful for the aforesaid Master and his successors to remove the aforesaid chaplain from the said Chantry, and induct and institute another in his place in the same Chantry, without the leave of anyone thereto being asked, or obtained. In witness whereof to the one part of these indentures, remaining with the aforesaid Master and Commonalty, we have set our seals; but to the other three parts of the same, remaining with us, and the chaplain aforesaid, and the Prior and Convent aforesaid, the common seal of the Commonalty of the borough of Welles aforesaid is appended. Given at Welles, on the twenty-fifth day of September, in the fifth year of the reign of King Henry the Fourth, above mentioned [A. D. 1404].

(The original is endorsed) "Foundation of the Chantry of Thomas Tanner and Isabella his wife."

The houses granted by the foregoing charter are those adjoining the Somerset Hotel, and that on the east side, now occupied as the Post-office; and on part of the site of the "shops" is the house forming the east corner of High Street and Grope Lane (now Union Street).

The founder of the chantry, Thomas Tanner, probably died on the 23rd or 24th of November. This is ascertained from the fact that his death-bed grant, already quoted, bears date the 22nd November, 1401, and the first of the following releases or re-grants to his widow, is dated the 25th November, in the same year:—

"This Indenture witnesseth that John Wykyng, John Brown, and John Wellyngtone, chaplain, have delivered, granted, and by this indenture confirmed, unto Isabelle, late the wife of Thomas Tannere, of Welles, all their lands and tenements, rents, services, and reversions, which they lately had of the gift of the before-named Thomas Tannere, in Welles, Cokesleghe, Ebbeworthe, Hope, Miltone, and Woky: three burgages in the vill of Welles excepted, situate together on the south side of the High-street, in the vill of Welles aforesaid, between the tenements of Edward Draycote, on the east side, and the tenement of the Vicars of the Church of St. Andrew, at Welles, on the west side; one burgage whereof Gregory Skynnere now inhabits on the east side, and John Tannere holds another burgage for the term of his life and that of Isabelle his wife, and the third burgage, lately built, is now in the hands of the said John, John, and John, and also two shops excepted, situate together in the same vill, on the north side of the same street, between the messuage of the Prior and brethren of the Hospital of St. John at Welles, which Agnes Kynge now inhabits, on the east side, and the messuage formerly belonging to William Draycote, on the west side,—To have and to hold all the aforesaid lands and tenements, rents, services, and reversions with all their appurtenances, except as above excepted, unto the aforesaid Isabelle, late the wife of the before-named Thomas, for the whole of her life; she paying yearly for the same unto the aforesaid John, John, and John, one rose at the feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist [24th June], and rendering unto the chief lords of those fees, for the aforesaid John, John, and John, all the rents and services due and of right accustomed for the same; and also supporting all other charges upon the said tenements incumbent. In witness of which thing, to this present writing the seals of the parties hereto alternately are set: and because their seals to many are unknown, the seal of the office of the Master of the Commonalty of the borough of Welles, at the special and personal request of the parties aforesaid, is to these presents appended: these being witnesses hereto, John Blythe, the Master of the Commonalty of the borough of Welles aforesaid, Thomas Hore, Richard Groos,

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burgesses of Welles, John Atte Chapele, John Pynchard, and others. Given at Welles, on Sunday next after the feast of St. Katherine the Virgin [25th Nov.] in the third year of the reign of King Henry, after the Conquest the Fourth." [A.D. 1401].

"To all the faithful in Christ to whom this present writing shall come, John Wykyng, John Brown, and John Wellyngtone, Chaplain, Greeting in the Lord. Know ye that we have remitted, released, and wholly for ourselves our heirs, and executors for ever, have quit claim unto Isabelle who was the wife of Thomas Tannere, of Welles, deceased, all our right and claim which we have had, have, or in any way may have in all those lands and tenements, rents, services and reversions, with all their appurtenances, which we lately had of the gift and feoffment of the aforesaid Thomas Tannere, within the borough of Wells, and in Cokesleghe, Ebbeworthe, Hope, Miltone, near Welles, and Woky, within the hundred of Welles Forum; three burgages in the Vill of Welles excepted [description as in the preceding deed] on the west side; so that neither we the aforesaid John Wykyng, John Brown, and John Wellyngtone, our heirs or executors, nor any other person in our name, shall exact, demand, or have any right or claim in all the aforesaid lands and tenements, rents, services, and reversions, with all their appurtenances, or in any parcel of the same, except only the three burgages and two shops above excepted, in any way in future, but shall be by these presents excluded from the same for ever. In witness of which thing to this our present writing we have set our seals: and because our seals to many are unknown, the seal of the office of the Master of the Commonalty of the borough of Welles, at our special request, is to these presents appended; these being witness hereto, John Blythe, the Master of the Commonalty of the borough aforesaid, Thomas Hore, Roger Chapman, Richard Groos, burgesses of Welles, John Goundenham, John Atte Chapele, John Pynchard, and others. Given at Welles on Tuesday the Feast of St. John the Apostle and Evangelist, [27 Dec.] within the week of our Lord's Nativity, in the third year of the reign of King Henry, after the Conquest the Fourth [A. D. 1401].

(The original is endorsed) "Evidences of Thomas Tannere, and release of John Wykyng, John Brown, and John Wellyngtone, feoffees of Thomas Tannere, made to Isabella, the wife of the said Thomas, of all lands and tenements within the borough of Welles, except three messuages and two shops, pertaining to the Chantry of the said Thomas Tannere."

I have here added another release or re-grant to Isabella, Thomas Tanner's widow, as it discloses the fact that Thomas Raley the grantor, was a near relative to Thomas Tanner, and had, probably, set up some kind of claim to his property :

Know all men by these presents that I, Thomas Raley, Parson of the church of Bleodon, have remised, released, and wholly for myself and my heirs and executors, for ever, quit claim unto Isabelle, who was the wife of my cousin, Thomas Tannere, of Welles, John Brown and John Wellyngtone, Chaplain, [and] the heirs and assigns of the same Isabelle, all the right and claim which I have in all the lands and tenements, with the appurtenances, which belonged to the aforesaid Thomas Tannere, in Welles, Cokesleghe, Ebbeworthe, Hope, Miltone, and Woky, and elsewhere, wheresoever in the County of Somerset. Know also all men that I, Thomas Raley, before mentioned, have remitted and released unto the same Isabelle, John Brown, and John Wellyngtone, chaplain, and the companions of the before-named Isabelle, executors of the testament of the aforesaid Thomas Tannere, all manner of actions, real and personal; that so, neither I, the before-named Thomas Raley, nor my heirs, can have any such action against the aforesaid Isabelle, John Brown, and John Wellyngtone, Chaplain, or the companions of the before-named Isabelle, executors of the testament aforesaid, or any right or claim in the lands and tenements aforesaid, or in any parcel thereof, in future, in anyway whatsoever, but shall be wholly excluded from the same for ever by these presents. In witness of which thing, to these presents I have set my seal; and because my

seal is to many persons unknown, the seal of the office of the Master of the Commonalty of the borough of Welles, at my especial request, is to these presents appended: these being witnesses hereto, John Blythe, the Master of the Commonalty aforesaid, Thomas Hore, Roger Chapman, John Wycombe, Nicholas More, and others. Given at Welles, on Monday next after the Feast of St. Gregory the Pope [12th March] in the third year of the reign of King Henry, after the Conquest the Fourth." [A. D. 1402].

The services, and duties, prescribed by the foundation deed probably continued until the Reformation, when they ceased. In the survey of Chantries, free-Chapels, &c., made by order of Edward VI., in the first year of his reign, this Chantry is thus noticed:—

"The Chauntrye foundyd wthin the paryshe churche ther, called Tanner's Chauntrye, is yerely worth in redy money to be levyed and receyved of the issues, revenues and profects of the landes ten'ts and heredit's belong'g to the Maister and cominalte of the Cite of Welles,—lxviii. viiijd.

Plate and Ornaments,—None.

Memor'd.—John Turnor, Clerke, Incu'bent ther.

In the course of the renovations effected by Mr. Powell, a small mural tablet was found inserted in the wall of this chapel, thus inscribed in mediæval characters: *Annibersate Thome Tanner est in festo S'ce Katarine.*"

There cannot be much doubt that the remains of the founder, Thomas Tanner, and probably of others of his family connections were interred in this chapel, where there is still a very ancient grave stone, part of the inscription on which still remains, though partially concealed by the seats lately placed there.

In the chapel adjoining the south transept, was another altar dedicated to St. Cuthbert, the patron saint of the church. This is, in modern times, better known as "Leigh's" or "Coward's Chapel," from the fact that old Wells families of those names, for several generations, used it as their peculiar place of worship in the church, and as a resting place for their mortal remains after death. In Cardinal Pole's pension list (2 and 3 Phillip and Mary), St. Cuthbert's Chantry is thus noticed:—

"Joh'nis Tanner, vlti. Incumb' Cant. Sci Cuthberti Wellens per ann.—lxs."

It will be observed that the window in the eastern wall of this transept is of much earlier date than the corresponding part on the north side. This is noticed in another portion of this work.

Several of the other Chantries had endowments, whilst others were maintained from casual sources, arising from obits, and other special gifts of a somewhat similar nature. To the Trinity



Chapel belonged houses and lands of considerable value, the gift of divers benefactors. The following is a grant for increasing the endowment, the original of which (in Latin) is, among others, with the city records :

"Know all present and to come, that I, John the Roper of the borough of Wells, have given and granted, and by this my present deed, confirmed to William Churchstyle, and Ad[am] de Carlton, the keepers of the goods [of the Fraternity] of the Holy Trinity in the church of S. Cuthbert of Wells, and to their co-brethren and successors for ever, One messuage, with the curtilage adjoining and their appurtenances in Wells aforesaid; which said messuage with the curtilage adjoining, is situate in the street which is called Neue-strete, between a messuage of the late Stephen Gay, on the south side, and a messuage which Agnes Crosse holds of Thomas de Mertok, on the north: To have and to hold the aforesaid messuage with the curtilage adjoining, and the appurtenances, to the said William and Adam, their co-brethren and successors for ever, of the chief lord of the fee by the services therefor due and accustomed; And I the said John and my heirs the said messuage, with the curtilage adjoining, and the appurtenances, to the said William and Adam and their co-brethren and successors against all persons will warrant, acquit, and defend for ever. In witness whereof my seal to these presents is affixed, (In the presence of) these witnesses:—Walter de Temedebury, John the Roper, Richard Staweye, Thomas Phillipps, William Churchstyle, John Smogge, John Benedict, and others. Given at Wells, on Tuesday next after the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Mary, in the 41st year of the reign of Edward the Third after the Conquest." [1366].

The donor, John le Roper, an eminent citizen of Wells, filled the office of Mayor in 1317 and 1347, and probably in other years. He was, I believe, interred in the chapel he had partially endowed. It is certain that he founded a Chantry in the church of St. Cuthbert, which is proved by the will of Johanna Drexon, widow of John Drexon, of Wells, Shoemaker, made A. D. 1509, by which she gives a legacy of 4d. to the chaplain "Cantarie Joh'es Roper." An obit service was also founded in the cathedral for this John le Roper, which was endowed with a yearly pension of one mark, or 13s. 4d., payable out of a house in Grope Lane, (now Union-street).

There are numerous other gifts to several of the altars in the church, the original grants of which are with the municipal records. The following are instances:—

A. D. 1280. John Wellifed (son and heir of Roger Wellifed) granted a rent of sixpence out of a house in Grope Lane for the sustentation of a light at the Altar of the B. V. Mary, payable at Easter to the Proctor of the Light.

A. D. 1347. Alice, Relict of John Littlewyn, granted a rent of 5s. out of a tenement in a lane called Isaacke's Mead, on the north side of Tucker street, in Wells, to John le Roper, Seneschal (Mayor) of Wells, and Warden of the church of St. Cuthbert, and his successors for ever, to the honor and service of the B. V. Mary, for the soul of herself and her husband then deceased, and all the faithful dead.

A. D. 1371. John le Roper (before noticed) granted to William Churchstyle, and William Skynner, Wardens of the goods of the Holy Trinity, a yearly rent of 2s. out of a tenement in Touker Street, in Wells,

The endowments belonging to the different Chantries were, as usual in early times, mostly granted on leases for lives, or for years. Here is an instance:—

A. D. 1356. William Churchstyle and John Churchstyle, Wardens of the goods of the Holy Trinity, with the assent of the Chaplain and Conservators, and all the brethren of the said Fraternity, granted a tenement in the west part of High Street, in Wells, to Sir John Fitzpyn and Eleanor his wife for the term of their lives, under the yearly rent of 2s.

Besides the endowments before noticed, there were divers sums paid for Obits, to the priests who did duty at the altars, being moneys given by many different persons for the observance with prayers and alms of the day of the anniversary of their death. I cannot particularize these donations, which were very numerous, but the aggregate amount, at the Reformation, was £4. 1s. 4d., as will be seen by the following extract from the Survey and Report of the Commissioners of Edward VI., before referred to:—

"Obyts foundyd w<sup>in</sup> the paryshe churche ther ar yerely worthe in annual rents to be levyed as well of the issues and revenues of the landes and ten'ts belonging to the foresayd Maister and Comynalte, as also of one ten't in Chamb'leyn's Streete, w<sup>in</sup> the said Cite, belonging to the Vicar of the saide paryshe for the tyme beinge,—℥iiij, xvij."

"Memor'd.—Ther was yerely distributed to the poore people out of the premises, xijjs. iiijd."

Of this sum of £4 1s. 4d., £4 were paid by the Corporation of Wells, and the remaining 16d. out of the Vicars' house in Chamberlain Street, as will be noticed in another part of the present work.

The Altar of St. Ethelred is noticed in the Valor Ecclesiasticus of Henry VIII. John Ryse is said to be the chaplain, and it is also stated that he had a pension assigned to him of £3 6s. 8d. yearly.

There was an obit founded in the church of St. Cuthbert by Walter de Lechlade, Succentor of the Cathedral. It is noticed in the capitular records in 1268.





## The "Exchequer," or "Treasure House."

**T**HE apartment on the north side of the nave, and adjoining the Chapel of the Holy Trinity, was, in early times, called the "Exchequer." The original purpose for which this apartment was designed, was, there cannot be much doubt, for the safe keeping of the vestments, plate, and other valuables belonging to the church, and the different altars, as well as a repository for charters, muniments, books, and accounts relating to the Church. This is confirmed by the frequent notices of the "Exchequer" in the Churchwardens' accounts in the 14th and 15th centuries. In 1554, the following entry occurs in the corporate records :—

"M'd that at the 'Cheker in the churche of Seynt Cuthb't, the xij day of April the xxvj yere of Kyng Henry VIII., in the presence of William Sabyne, being then M'r of the Cyte of Wells (and others), they then receyved of the sayd M'r and Brethren an exemplification vnder the grete seale of Edward the first, concerning a grant to be dyscharged of all man'er of Tolle, safely to be kepte, and to be delyvered when it shall be required."

An earlier instance of a notice of the "Treasury" occurs in the will of Walter de Compton, Burgess of Wells, merchant, dated in 1362, which contains divers gifts to the church of St. Cuthbert, the cathedral, and for other purposes, including a gift to the venerable men, Master Stephen Pempel, Dean, and the Chapter of the church of Wells, of a rent of six marks out of a tavern and burgage in High Street, opposite Jacob's Well [lately known as the King's Arms Inn]; in trust for his wife, Margery, for her life, then to the said Dean and Chapter for ever, on condition of their finding one fit chaplain, who should be a vicar in the cathedral. to celebrate at the altar of St. Stephen there, for

the souls of him and his said wife. The testator then directs that the charters (or title deeds) of the said burgage should be delivered to the Dean and Chapter, to remain in their archives, and they to give security to his executors, to remain in the treasury of the church of St. Cuthbert in the custody of the Steward (or Mayor), of the Gilde [the Corporation], of the Towne of Wells.

After the Reformation it was used as a store, or magazine for powder and arms.

There are notices of this repository for munitions of war early in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In 1568, the Corporation purchased arms and powder, and paid for both out of the city revenues. In the Receiver's account under date, Jan. 18th, 11 Eliz. (1569), several entries occur indicative of the disturbed state of the nation. The following are examples :—

It'm. Payd to Wm. Lewes for iij payre of Corslets, &c. xiijs. iiijd.

It'm. Payd to Rob. Belle for a Payre of Harness that was bought of Yewstres, the Smith, xxijs.

It'm. Payd Henry Yewstres for the new dressing of the same harness, and to make a new collar unto it, viijs. vjd.

It'm. Payd to the said Hy. Yewstres for a payre of Corsletts, xxxs.

It'm. Payd to Gabryell Houson for vj Morrys Pykes, xxijs.

It'm. Payd the Drome player at the firste daie of his play, before the muster and at the muster, viijd.

It'm. Payd for iij lbs of Gunpowder, bott at sundry tymes, xviijd.

On the 12th May, 12 Eliz., the Corporation met and recorded their proceedings;

"At the same convocacon it is condiscinded and agreed by the Maister of the Towne and his brethrene, viz., Richard Godwyn, Gent., now Maister, John Godwyn, sen., Will'm Houseman, Esquier, Jno. Boddie, Will'm Godwyn, Thos. Lygh, Will'm Smyth, capper, Thomas Attwell, Rob. Heath, Will'm Howp'r, Wm. Gaume, Walter Gorwage, wt. others, that Will'm Smyth, Capper, and Rob. Chycke, constables, shall receyve and have vnto theyre handes and custody, to be safely kept for the use and behofe of the saide Towne, all suche Armor, and municions as lately was del'veyed by Sir Morres Barkeley, Knight, vnto them, and that ther be a byll indented betwene the sayde Maister of the Towne and them of the same, and that the sayde harness shal be by the saide constables sekowred, dress'd and made cleane; and to be layde in the *Treasure House of Saynct Cuthbert's Church*, and there to remayne tyll farder order be taken for the same."

In 1605, the Corporation met and made the following order :—

"Whereas there is certaine powder remayminge in the custodie of Mr. John Aishe and Mr. Will'm Bull, viz. in the hands of Mr. Aishe, by his owne confession, lxxvibs, and in the hands of Mr. Will'm Bull, by his owne confession, lxxx lbs and odd: w'ch powder was p'vided by the towne; and there is also in the church, in the custodie of the churchwardens, about five barrells; it is now ordered that the said Mr. Aishe and Mr. Bull shall bringe in the powder that is in their hands to fill the barrells that are not full in the church; and it is ordered that what powder there wanteth w'ch the towne ought to p'vide, that the same shal be p'vided vpon informaçon of the constable, Hugh Meade, and John Hole, gen'all receiver who are to survey what is there, and also to enforme what is wantinge. This to be done by thursdaie next."

At another meeting of the Corporation in 1621, the following record occurs:—

"A note taken the xxij of September, 1621, of the Armour, Powder and Matches, in the p'sence of Mr. Henrie Foster, Mr. Hughe Meade, and Mr. Tho. Baron:—

Item. In the church where the powder doth lye, there are Five Barrells of Powder, which hath 100 lbs weight to everie Barrell, and one Barrell that hath but 26 lbs.

In 1626 it is also recorded:—

"Mr. Vertue Hunt, Maior, viewed the powder remayning in the church of St. Cuthberts:—

No 1, weieth—barrell and all—vxxxii lbs; No 2, weyes—barrell and all—vjxxx. lbs; No 3, weyes—barrell and all—82 lbs; No 4, weyes—barrell and all—113 lbs; No 5, weyes—In clean powder—86 lbs: 524 lbs of powder, barrells and all.

Accompted vi. September, 1626.

Vertue Hunt, Mayor."

Not only was the church thus made the receptacle of munitions of war, but the sacred edifice on several occasions became a place of confinement for military prisoners. This occurred repeatedly during the great rebellion, and again after the "Battle of Sedgmoor," when the Cloisters of the Cathedral, and the Bishop's great tythe barn were also found necessary for the same purpose. In thus irreverently using the church, much mischief was done, which remained apparent up to within a comparatively short period. As evidence that the prisoners taken after the Battle of Sedgmoor were imprisoned in the church of St. Cuthbert, I here give an extract from the county records, in 1685:

"Upon information and complaint made unto this court that the several persons undernamed have severally and respectively been, and now are at considerable charges in supplying the poor prisoners taken in or for the late Rebellion in the west, and committed to custody in the cloisters of the Cathedral Church, and in the Parish Church of St. Cuthbert in Wells, in this county, and also in several other places there, with bread to the usual allowances for prisoners of that kind, and also in curing them, being dangerously wounded, but have not as yet been reimbursed the same charges, either by the same persons or otherwise: This Court doth therefore order and desire the Right Hon'ble Francis Poulett, Edward Berkeley, Peter Roynon, Esq's, and John Bailey, Doctor of Laws, four of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace of the said county, or any two or more of them, within convenient time, to convoke the said persons before named before them, or any two or more of them, at such place as they, or any two or more of them shall think meet, and thereupon examine, moderate, rectify, and calculate and adjust the several and respective accounts of the said persons in the premises, and the true state of the same accounts, when so rectified and adjusted, humbly to certify the same unto his Majesty under their, or any two or more of their hands, in writing."

Within the memory of living persons, the City Fire Engine was kept in the Treasure House, and instances have occurred in which the engine has been taken out of the church for use during the time of divine service.

I may here add that the ancient exchequer was not the only place in the church where a store of powder was preserved. The "Parvise," or apartment over the south porch was for many years used as a magazine for powder, a considerable quantity of which I saw loose on the floor within the past 20 years.

### THE BELLS.

There are six bells in the tower, mostly of modern date. The most ancient is the fifth, which was cast by Roger Perdy (or Perdue), in 1624. The bells are inscribed as follows:—

First Bell,—“When I was made, then people freely gave. B. H. L. D., 1683.”

Second,—“Mr. Robert Lax and Mr. John Hickes, Ch. Wardens, 1772. Abra'm Bilbie, fecit.”

Third,—“T. S., 1664. E. B.”

Fourth,—“William Collins and Robert Willmott, Churchwardens. William Bilbie, Chewstoke, fecit, 1785.”

Fifth,—“Anno Domini 1624.”

Sixth,—“I to the church the living call, and to the grave doth summon all. John Lax, Churchwarden, 1787. William Bilbie, Chewstoke, fecit.”

Although there is only one of the present bells of an earlier date than 1624, the following curious extracts from the corporate records prove that others were re-cast at or about that time; and these extracts are also additional evidence of the unusual connection of the corporate body with the parish church.

“xxx die Aprilis anno R.E's jacobii nunc Angl., &c., vicesimo sc'do—1624.”  
 “Memorand. It is agreed betweene Humfrey Palmer, Mayor of the Cyttie or Burrow of Welles in the county of Soms't, Edward Barloe and Robert Pointing, Churchwardens of the p'ishe church of St. Cuthb'te w'thin the said Cyttie or Burrow and p'ishe of St. Cuthb'te of th' one p'tie, and Roger Purdy of the Cyttie of Bristol, bellfounder, of th' other p'tie. In'pris'; That he the said Roger Purdy for and in consideraçon of the sum of viij*l* of currant english money, and one hundred pounds of bellmettall, shall take down the tenor bell now hanging in the tower of the p'ishe church of St. Cuthb'te, and after the weying thereof, carry the same vnto the place where he doth intend to cast him in Welles afforesaid, and ther cast him and make retorne of the same belle and mettall in full weight as he receaveth the same, and by the same weight. And all w'ch is to be doen at the p'per cost and charge of the said Purdy, excepting the charge at the stock weele, rope, and clipper, and that he may agree in musicall tune and harmony with the first and second bells hanging in the said tower, and soe that likewise the said five bells may agree in true musicall tune and harmony, w'thin three moneths next after such taking downe of the said tenor. And likewise that the said Purdue shall geve sufficient security to the likeinge of the said Mayor and Churchwardens in three hundred pounds for the answeringe and deliv'inge back againe of the same bell w'thin one wyke after the del'vie in full weighte. And also geve other securitie for th' maintayninge of the same bell by the space of seven yeares. And likewise the said Roger Purdue is to allow one hundred of tynn to the castinge of the same bell yf occasion shal be, for w'ch he is to be allowed one hundred of bell metall out of the said tenor by the said Mayor and Churchwardens, And that the said Roger is to gett all such other moneys as he can in the towne by voluntary contributions.”

30 June 22 James 1.

"Request was made by Roger Purdy to have the money dew to him from the p'ish for castinge the bells, and thervppon it is thought fitt that ther shal be a rate made by the p'ishe frthwith to pay that w'ch by relacon is about £viiij. viijs. and that rate shal be paid frthwith."

20 Sep., 1624.

"Whereas ther was this p'sent day warned a 'chequer for to confer of such business as concerneth the good of the town, and likewise to take out of the chest the some of x£ to pay vnto Roger Purdy, the bellfounder, towards his charges for castinge the bells, And for that ther did not appeare above the numbres ix, whose names are above written, and the residew made default ;—Therefore we whose names are subscribed, according to the order of this howse, the residew of the xxiiijtie not appearing, have thought fitt for the help of the said Roger Purdy, he having done his worke, to take owte the said some of x£ to pay vnto him towards his charges in castinge of the bells, w'ch said money is deliv'd to Mr. Humphrey Palmer, Mayor, to be paid to the said Purdy, and the same money is to be taken vpp againe at the church accompt."

"Humfry Palmer, Maior, Thomas Baron, Hugh Meade, John Crees, Vertue Hunt, Richard Casbeard, John Cox, Walter Bricke, Edward Barloe."

"Received of Mr. Humfrey Palmer, Mayor, for and towards the charges of castinge the third, fowerth, and fiveth bells, the some of xiiij£. I say received."  
(No signature).

4 May, 1625.

"Ther was paid to Thomas Willis, to the vse of Roger Purdew, iiij£, being part of the £vj vjs., dew to the said Purdew, for the p'she of St. Cuthb'te, for castinge of three bells ther, for w'ch they have geven acquitance."

"Witness, Henr. Goold."

"Thomas Willies."

In 1682 the Dean and Chapter gave 40s. towards a new bell at St. Cuthbert's. This, there cannot be much doubt, refers to the treble cast in 1683.





## The Appointment of Churchwardens ;

AND THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CORPORATION OF  
WELLS AND THE CHURCH OF ST. CUTHBERT.

**T**HE extraordinary connection between the Corporation of Wells, and the parish church has already been noticed. The records of the proceedings of the corporate body commence in 1378, from which time they continue, with but few interruptions, down to the present time. Throughout this long period, especially before, and for some years after the Reformation, the municipal authorities appear to have taken a very active part in the affairs of the church, and although the records referred to begin at the date mentioned, yet there are plain indications, in other documents belonging to the corporation, of the close intercourse between the Governors of the city and the church long before that time.

The Corporation of Wells, in its original constitution, I have no doubt, partook as much, or more of a religious and eleemosynary character, as of a body constituted purely and entirely for the performance of duties such as those which municipal bodies in later times were required to fulfil. The earlier records of the acts of the Wells Corporation go far to confirm this view, and even up to the present time there is evidence in the annual appointment of one of their own body as churchwarden, that such an assumption is not altogether inconsistent with truth. The church of St. Cuthbert unquestionably derived a large portion of its local importance as well as a considerable



amount of the revenues for its support, from or through the Corporation, which, in early documents, was styled the "*Gilde burgei de Welles*." Moreover, nearly all the existing muniments relating to the church and its former possessions are to be found in the custody of the corporation, and it is certain that soon after the Reformation, a large portion of the property which had before then been held by the corporate body, and by them devoted almost exclusively to services in the church of St. Cuthbert, was transferred to, or in some way got into the hands of the municipal authorities for purely secular purposes, and continued to be held in that way until alienated by the corporation, as the larger portion has been within the last sixty years. As a further confirmation of that which I have ventured to state with respect to the early constitution of the corporation, I here give, *in extenso*, the ordinances enacted by the Mayor and his brethren, (then numbering twenty-four) in the year 1437, which will, I feel assured, be read with much interest by residents in Wells; and the fact that these curious local laws have never before been published will increase their value, as conveying an accurate knowledge and giving so true a picture of the actings and doings of our forefathers, and the customs that prevailed here between four and five hundred years ago. For these reasons, (though not very closely or directly connected with the history of the parish church), I venture to introduce these ordinances to my readers.

"Ordinatio.....sive Burgi Wellen. fact'—15 Hen. VI. Anno Dn'o. 1437."

"IN HONOUR of the moste puissant high mighty glorious and eternall Lorde Our Lorde J'h'u,—the moste blessedfull Virggine Moder and Maide Marie,—Saynt Andrewe,—Saynt Cuthberte,—and all the Holy Company of Heaven:—For that we, Burgeisses of the Cite of Welles now beinge of this present tyme, have coneyved, seyne, and in our cense ripelye felte how worshipfully and discretelye our antecessoures Burgeisses ordayned, compownded, and made by theyre sage and wyse discrecons div'se convenyent ordinances which be used and contynewed among us until this day:—For great honour, socour, comforte, ease, pease, rest, and tranquillitie to be susteyned and had among us, our successours and heires, burgeisses of the saide Cite, worlde without ende:—whiche laudable ordynances be somewhat withdrawene and negligently remised and not used;—for the whiche grete losse and dysease for the defawte of undewe and inconveniente rewle hathe happened and fall among us burgesses more than was of olde tyme; WHEREFORE we assemble together the Thursday nexte after the Feste of Seynte Thomas the blessed Martir, the yere of ower Lord God, a thousand cccc and xxxvj, and in the yere of our moste excellent and gracions Lord King Henry the vi, aft' the conqueste of England the xv yers, and ther appered in the Gyldehall of the said cite on ther p'per p'sons the gretesse, worthyese, and wyseste for the moste and suffyciente p'te, and ther so aggregate assembled and unyted together by vertuowse and laudable counselle among them for to call and drawe in againe the good and laudable uses and ordynances before had, and to expulse and abject all contaygouse, and seditiouse matters contrariorious ordynces and usages, and for to renewe, make, and adde more spedefull, lefull, nedefull, and sufficient matt's and articles w'ch should turne with

the ayde of the Trinitie, in whose name the sayde Burgesses and fraternitie be founded, groundd, creat, and endowed to worships, increase peace, and rest to the sayde Burgesses sworne, and to the Cominalte of the sayde Cite of Welles to theire successours and heires;—FOR THE WHICHE wee, the sayde Burgeysse, the sayde daye and yere by one assente, consente, frewill, and full agreement, have chosen iiij indifferent Burgeysse, circumspecte and trewe men,—Willyam Weye, Simon Sharma', John Crappe, and Robert Bullooke, and sworne upon a boke for to chouse and name xxiiij p'sones of the most discrete burgesses sufficiente sworne not corrupte but being of sadde and goode rule, havynge insyghte, conscience, and trewe conceyte, dredynge God, and usinge trothe to sette just and equall gov'nance betweene any p'son, pore and ryche, betwen burgeis and burgeis, havynge noe p'tialitie for dread, love, hate, or any affinitie that they bore unto any burgeis or burgeises in tyme comynge; upon whiche the sayde iiij burgesses so elected and sworne, have lymyted, named, apoynted, chosen, and dely'ved up to the Maister of the sayde Cite, that tyme beyng and to his brethrene by a bille the names of xxiiij burgesses, suffyoient and able p'sons, that is to wete,—Richard Dyer,—at that tyme Maister,—John Austyll, Esquyer, John Godwyn, John Collys, John Whetele, Richard Gooderydge, Thomas Sholer, Willyam Vowell, Thomas Horwode, Stephen Merston, John Parys, John Frome, and other, for to ordeyne, compounde, drawe and sette good, lawdable, and lefull ordin'oes and composicions made for good gov'ance to be hadde and contened to all the burgeisses and Com'onalties of the sayde Cite, and them sworne uppon the halydome severallye well and consciently, trewelye, and dewelye, to do in all wyse by ther power in all and singlar articles as it is above rehersed, and so to conteneue during ther lyves: and furthermore the same burgeisses have ordeyned and graunted that as soon as it shall happen that any burgeisses of the saide xxiiij burgeisses ther successours and heires soe united and sworne to ayde, sette, and reforme goode and sadde gov'ance as is above rehersed, be fallyn in syknes, pov'tie, febleness, or decrepite, or for impot'cye of his body may not labor nor counselle give, then that the sayde xxiiij burgeyses ther successours and heyres for suche burgeyses soe fallen in febleness and pov'tie by the visita'con of the sowrde of our Lorde God, shall chouse and take in among them other able and suffyoient burgeyses of good condicion before tyme not electe nor chosen into ye sayde nombre of xxiiij burgeisses, and soe daye in daye and yere in yere as often tyme nedyth, soe that the sayde nombre of xxiiij burgeisses shall ev'more stande, holle; and the burgeyses as oftentyme as they be soe chosen and taken into the sayde nombre for to be sworne in man'r and forme as it is above specyfyed. AND alsoe the sayde burgeisses wyll and ordeyneth for the', ther successours and heires, that if any burgeyse sworne not electe into the nombre of xxiiij fele hymselfe agreved, vexed, damaged, hurte, or oppressed in anywyse unreasonablye by any ordin'oe of newe made by the sayde xxiiij burgeyses, or olde ordeyn'oes ther successours and ther heyres in tyme comynge, that then the saide burgeyses or burgeyse felynge hymselfe agreved shal come and p'fer hymselfe to the Maister and then his greffe, w'th harme that he hath had and suffered in the meantyme by reason of the sayde newe ordyn'oes and the composycons, and as soon as the Maister for the tyme beyng hathe notyoe and credyble knowledge of the burgeis or burgeisses soe damaged and agreved, that then the sayde Maister calling to hym the sayde nombre of the xxiiij discrete burgeisses, shall ordeyn, remedye and corre'con in that behalfe of what condic'on and speche that ev' it be w'th all Godlye haste, not delayeinge the matter above xv dayes: Alsoe the sayde burgeyses will and ordeyneth for them, ther successours and heires, that all worthy and laudable ordin'oes sette and made by ther p'decessors burgeyses of old tyme used, not hurtyng nor dysmembry'g to the sayde burgeyses to ther successours nor ther heires in tyme to come shal be observed and not broken nor suspended in noe wyse, but to be amended, encresed, made and compounded, soe that they may turne resorte and be hadde to p'steritie and encrease to all nedefull speds and nedys that belong or p'teyne in anywyse nowe or in tyme to come to the sayde burgeisses ther successours and heires, and to objecte and refuse them that be refuseable by that the wise and sadde reforma'con of the saide xxiiij burgeyses and of ther Counsell. AND they wyll and ordeyneth that yf any burgeys or burgeyses, ther successours and heires disobey, w'thsay, or w'th stond abett or make, enbette,

or enfourme or nouryshe any burgeysse to doe agaynste the said ordinaunces of burgeyssees of what degree or estate that ev' he be of w'out cause reasonable, shal be expulsed and put out of his burgeiswicke, and also to fall in a greivouse contempt amongst the Maister and his burgeissee, as they will demeane him of reason. ALSO THAT that the Com'une assemble shall holde from hensforth as it is now, and as it was used of olde tyme, that is to wete,—When and as oftentymes as it liketh the Maister for the tyme beyng to holde it. AND also that the xxiiij burgeyssees sompned by the com'ndment of the Maister for evident and needful cause, come and appere at that houre, and at suche a place that is geve to knowledge by the Towne Clerke, or by his Deputie; and if it be soe that moo of the said xxiiij make defaulte and come not at the houre assigned by the clerke as is aforesayde, he and ev' y of them soe makynge defaulte shall rune in a payne of vis. viij*d.*, to be payd and employed to the churche works of Saynte Cuthb'te, within xv dayes nexte ensuewinge after the daye of his assemble; but yf soe be that he come to the Maister and he reasonable excuse hym that he might not come. AND ALSO p'vide, ordeyne, and grawnte that all the ordyn'ces and composicons that wer made of o'r ancessors and p'decessors of olde tyme beinge conteyned in an old Rolle, ensealed with the com'on seale, they that be goode, lefull and p'fitable shall stond in ther vertue and effecte, and for to be used heraft', and the' that be not laudable and suffycient, but hurtinge and doyng p'judice unto burysses shall be w'drawen, crossed, and suspended; Notwithstanding the olde rolle soe ensealed shall abyde and safelye be keppe for a memorye that all such ordyn'ces hathe bene hadde before this tyme. AND also we wyll and ordeyne that all the ordyn'ces which b'th conteyned in the grete paper Boke shall be written in this newe composicon and ordyn'ces, and they that be antient like, goodly, and vertuonslye ordeyned for p'fitt and worshipp to the saide Cite of Welles, and burysses of the same, to ther successours and heires ev' in tyme to come and soe to abyde and dwell in strength and effecte w'out end, sayng always the vertuous counsell of amendeinge and encreasinge of good and laudable rewle when more may be hadd.—FIRSTE AND FOREMOSTE, when the Maist'r of the sayd Cite is electe and chosen on Saynt Jerome his daye, the morow upon Michaelm's day, as the olde use was and is, he shall be sworne by the Towne Clerke, or by his Deputie, that he shall well and truelye the customes, usages, and ordyn'ces of the sayd Cite of Welles, Gov'n, sustaine, and kepe by his power: Also that the sayd Maist'r soe chosen at that assemble, the same daye, in ope' assemble, shall with counsell of his fellowes beinge there p'sent, chouse ij constables, honeste menne, sadde and discrete, for to gov'n the pease and all thynges doe as touchinge ther office of Constablewicke; and they to be sworne by the Clerke well and trewelye to s've the Kinge and Lorde of the Fraunchese: And also they shall chouse ij sufficiente menne, burgeissee, for to quelle and gether the com'on rente; And likewyse they to be sworne upon a boke by the Clerke, well and trewelye to gether the sayd rent, and trewe reknyng and accompte to geve and make of ther receyte and expenses to the Maister and his fellowes when they be dewelye warned: AND also they shall chouse ii Trinitie Wardeynes, ii Churche wardeynes, and ii Wardeynes for ovr Ladye Aulter; and lykewyse they and ev' y of them to be sworne upon a Boke by the clerke, trewe proctors to be, and trewelye to kepe the goodes of the churche, and trewe reknyng and accompte to geve of ther receytes unto the Maister and his Fellowes when they be dewelye warned: And also shamell wardeynes to be chousen, and in likewyse sworne that they shall geve knowledge to the Maister, or to the Baylyff of the sayd Cite, that if any vittaller bring any vittalls, fleshe, or fysh, but if it be savery and holsom for ma' or woma', to putt it under areste, and the vittaller both, and they to ordeyne as they seme best to be done in that behalfe, upon payne of the forfeiture of the hole beste: And also strete wardeynes, one chousen of ev' y strete, shall be sworne that they shall welle and trewelye kepe the stretes, that swyne shall goe at large w'thowte they have a wardayne, and then that they doe dryve them to the Pownde that is ordeyned therfor, and to take for ther labour of the owners, for ev' y fote a pen'y before they make dely'vaunce, but yf the p'tie may gette any bett'r grace of them; AND alsoe yf any burgeisse have any man'r actoun, or variaunce agenste his brother, he shall send unto hym, or wher that he hath an actoun to byn yf his brother to declare his actoun unto hym or them, and yf he will not obeie and accorde w'th the ij fore-

men, or it be published in the semble, then he must be sumpned by the Clerke, takyng to hym a peny for the sompnyng: and yf he cume not at the firste, nor at the second sompnyng, but malicyously and wyllfully avoydith, and might cume and will not cume, he shall be discomyned without ende, and the playtiff to take his advantage in the lawe; but yf afterw<sup>e</sup> he may have better grace; also yf the p<sup>t</sup>ie playntiff do not send to the p<sup>t</sup>ie defendante accordynge as it afore rehersed, then that he shall lose to the Maist'r, and to the Trinitie, vjs. viij<sup>d</sup>.; AND alsoe that ev' y burgeis after his degree and facultie in all convo'cons and metynge of Bishoppes, or any other grete Lord or estate, or at any other disporite, to make dew reverence to the Maister, and ev' y burgeise one to another after ther estate, degree and faculte, and to geve hym space and reverence in sittynge, goynge, rydynge, and in worship doynge; and that noe burgeise p'sume to such feste, or gest'r'emy, but yf he be prayed or cepid therto; and that noe burgeise do contrary agaynst theis said ordi<sup>n</sup>nces upon payne of a grevous contempte thet he shall runne in as the Maister and his bretherene will resonably judge and awarde in that behalfe. AND also all arbitraments taken before the Maist'r betwene burgeise and burgeise for any act'on or stryfe that the p<sup>t</sup>ies sewe to ther men that they have chousen to make an ende between them before or on the day whiche the Maister hath lymtyed, and geve them for to make and ende as it is enhapened by the clerke, and he that sewyth not to his men flatt'yth and negligently letteth passe by and taketh no hede therof, he soe founde in defaulte shall paye unto the Maister and his fellowes and to the p<sup>t</sup>ie vj gallons of wyne, and yet more to fall in grevowse contempte amongst them; and the p<sup>t</sup>ie to take his advantage in the com'on lawe if the Maister and his brethren soe agre and consente. AND also that no burgeise what man'r, degre or reputa<sup>c</sup>on that ev' he be of that ageynste the Maister and his comperes and in 'semelles or any other convocacons or places of burgeisses aryse w<sup>th</sup> stoburne and provide herte and language in worde or dede contrarye to his oth and theis new ordinaunce, eyther which the Maister and comperes be distroubled and may not be herd obey'd nith' have no rewle, and after that he is ones or twice com'anded by the Maister for to kepe silence and peace, which but yf he do obedientlye, he shall be discomyn'd for ev'r, or else falle in a grete contempte amongst the Maister and his fellowes as they will adjudge it of reason. AND also that noe burgeise sworne doe agenst the usages and liberties of burgeises, man nother woman of what degree that ev' he be of agenst his brother that is a burgeise, he shall not hym nother her meyntyne, norishe, nor counsell geve nor trouble in nowyse pr'vyly nor openly, but if he by the wey to drawe them or make them at oon and under none other color upon payne of discomynyng and puttinge owte of his fredome forev'r. AND also that no man'r of burgeise shall receyve into his howse noe man'r of straunger to brewe and make ale in his howse w<sup>th</sup>owte leve of the Maister vppon payne of xld. AND also that no man'r of burgeise havynge servauntes in his howse holde under hym, and byeth and selet as far furth as a burges doth under the color of his Maister; any burgeise that soe doeth w<sup>th</sup>owte leve firste asked of the Maister of the Towne, shall lose and forfeyte to the Maister and his fellowes vjs. viij<sup>d</sup>. AND also yf any burgeise bequethe londs or ten'ts, or other movable catall to son or dawghter, or to any kynde of theires, or to any straunge p'son, anon after that the testament is proved, executo's of the same testament shall bryng the same testam't to the Maister in open Semellye and ther do it to be red openlye by the clerke; and the same testament to be wryten in the com'une paper so that the forsayd children and other p'sons when they come ageyne may have and enjoye without frawde that that is them bequethed. AND also that the Com'une Sele nother the sele of office to no man'r straunger shall be graunted, but if so be that the tenem'ts or things purchased be w<sup>th</sup>in the borough fullye knowen to the Maister and his brethrene that it is trewe purchase or trewe inheritaunce that it may trewelye be done, and but if it be to any worthy p'son that is openlye knowen in the cuntrey as well as in the borrough, that the matter be sufficyent and trewe, and that the matter be rede by the towne clerke or his deputye, and by his handes or by his deputye seled before the Maister and xij of the worshipecfullest of his brethrene as it hath bene used of old tyme, and sworne therto, and to take for ther labor as the p'tyes and they may agre and acorde. AND also the seale of office for to be sette and putte to trewe matters in man'r and forme as it is rehersed

by the grete seale, takinge for ther labor as the p'tyes may accorde, savyngs that the Maister nedyth not to have but vj burgesses at the settinge of his seale. Also that the churchwardynes gether the Lightes of Saynte Nicholas, Katherine, Candlemasse, Estern, and Trendell, and all other man'r of getherers and quells's of mony that longeth to the churche of Seynte Cuthberte, shall yeelle accomptes to the Maister and his fellowes when they be dewelye warned; and as for the money soe gethered for to be disposed and put in ordyn'ce by ther advyse. AND also we will, ordeyn, and grawnte that these composiçions and ordyn'ces above rehersed, and other in tyme comyngs, to be compounded, and made by our afteroomers shall be rede, and openlye and distinctlye iiij tymes in the yere, ons a quarter, before all the burgeisses sworne at a com'on semlie, so that ev' ma,' high and low, may know his charge of his oath, and farthermore that be he whatsoever he be burgeise sworne that the poynts of his charge may dwelle the better in his mynde, and the better kepe his othe. AND also we will and ordeyne that what burgeiss of what degre or reputaçon that he be of, and if he be clepid to the Maister and his fellowes to counseile for grete businesse and nedes that longeth to the burgeyse and to the towne, and com'anded by the Maister and his fellowes to kepe counseile the matter w'ch is moved among them unto the tyme the matter be fully disputed and concluded among them, and fullye determyned and ended, and so that matter by the Maister and his fellowes for to declare it owteward to them that they seme it moste expedyente for to show it to for their honour and moste avayle to them and all the burgeyssees sworne; and who that doth the contrarye to this ordynance, of what estate or degre that ev'r he be, he shall rune in a grevowse contempte against the Maister and all burgeyssees sworne. AND also when it fallith that King, Prynce, Duke, Bishoppe of this Diocesse, approche or come to this Cite of Welles, for the whiche comyng the Maister and his brethrene burgeyssees muste ride or goe ageynste hym and bryng hym into this Cite of Welles, that ev'y burgeysse aft'r his degre shall ride or goo with the Maister ev'y man in his degre and drawe to his fellowe, and ston at the rewle and gov'nce of the Maister and of his fellowes, and not dissever nother departe asyndyer, but goodlye and demurelye ride or goo as them oughte to do, to the hono'r end worships of all the Towne. AND also the saide burgeisses will and ordeyne that when it folleth that any xth or xvth is graunted hole or halfe more or lesse, that in ev' strete of this cite of Welles shall be chosen a burgeise one or ij after that the strete is large by the Maister and Comonaltie in open semlie, and they sworne well and trewelye, and equallye, havynge noe p'tialitie to any man nor love nor drede, but ev' man after his facultie and havynge that God hath sent hym by ther estima'con, knowledge, conscience, and conyngs as hit hath byn used and don heretofore, and the quellers or getherers shal be chosen at that same semlie. Also that no burgeise of this place sworne for any varyaunce or slaunderouse words troble betwitxe him and his brother a burgeise, laboure to any person or p'sons for meynnten'ce otherwise then to burgeise unto the tyme he hath shewed the matter of variaunce the Maister and the Com'onaltie in the open halle, or ells afore the xxiiij upon payne of discomyngs forev'more. AND also it is ordeyned that if any burgeise draw violentlye any wepon againste his brother being a burgeise contrary to the Kinge's peas, he that so doth for ev'y tyme soe doeyngs, shall pay the Maister vjs. viiijd."

"Jurantu' xxiiij."

### "THE OATH OF THE XXIIJ."

"I will by my power and knowledge sette just and equall gov'nance betwixte all p'sons, burgeises of this Cite of Welles, bothe ryche and pore, haveing noe p'tialitie to any p'son of the same for any drede, love, hate, or affinite, but I shall evenlye and indifferentlye deme and doe after my knowledge and all the usages, ordynances, and counsell of the xxiiij that hereafter shall come to my knowledge, kepe, susteyne, and maintayne duringe my life, or as long as I shall be able to be one of the xxiiij. Soe helps me God, and by this boke."

"AN OATH NOT TO TROUBLE OR VEX ANY BURGEISE," &C.

"I shall hereafter for no discomyngs or other thinge don to me by reason of the same, vex, troble, or agreve any burgeise of this Cite of Welles, nor p'oewe, fere,

or cause any p'son to vex or trouble any burgeise of this place for the same by this boke, and by that oath that ymade firste to this halle when y was create burgeise.

**"JURANTU' MAGR'S IN DIE SANCTI JEROMONII."**

I shall welles and trowelye the laudable customes, usages, and ordynaunces of this Cite of Welles, and of this place gov'ne and susteyn by my power, &c.

*Jurantu' Clici.*

I shall trewe be in the office of Towne Clerke, and the Counseille of this place well and trowelye hele and kepe, and obedyent be to the Maister and burgeisses in the halle assembled, and all other thinges doe that belongeth to myne office by my power. Soe helpe me God, &c.

*Jurantu' Constabulariorum.*

I shall trewe constable be and trewe pr'sentm't make of blodde sheddyng, and and cryes, affrayes, rescouse made and of arrestes broken, and trowelye doe and kepe to my poure that belongeth to the office of Constable. Soe helpe me God, &c.

*Jurantu' Collector' Com' Redditus.*

I shall trewe Receyvor be and p'fitable to my poure to the Common Lyvelode of this cite, and trowelye, w'thowte frawde, charge and dysoharge myselfe and aske none allowaunce otherwyse than troth; and alsoe of my receypte and expences a trewe and lawfull accompte make, and doe all other thynges that longeth to myne office by my powre. Soe helpe me God, &c.

*Jurantu' Custod' bonor' Eccle'.*

I shall trewe be in the office of Churchwardeyne, and trowelye the goodes of the churche receyve and kepe, and of the same goodes a trewe accompte make, and all thinges doe that longeth to myne office of Churchwardeyne. Soe helpe me God, &c.

This same Oth and charge may serve as well for the Trinitie wardeynes, as our Ladye Wardeynes, ut sup.

*Jurantu' Custod' Macelloru'.*

I shall trewe Shambell wardeyne be, and duly see and ov'see that no vittaller bringing any vittal to this Towne, flesh, or fysh, but it be holosome for ma' and wooman's body, and to put him in areste that doeth the contrarye, and that the vittaller bring the skynne w'th hym to the markett, and his vittal: alsoe that y shall warne the Maister or the baylif of this towne of the said offences for the punishment in that behalfe. Soe helpe me God, &c.

*Jurantu' Custod' Vicorum.*

I shall well and trowelye kepe the office of strete wardeyne and the stretes of this cite, that no swyne shall go at large w'thin this cite w'thowte they have a wardeyne to kepe them; and them that y fynde the contry to dreve them unto the pownde that is ordeyned therfor, and to take for ev'ry fote ld., but if the owners may otherwyse agre w'th me and my fellows. Soe helpe me God, &c.

It will be observed that what our ancestors then did was done in honour of "Saynt Cuthbert," with the "ayde of the Trinitie," in whose name "the sayde Burgesses and Fraternitie," (the corporation), are said to be founded. The appointment and administering oaths of office of "two Trinitie Wardeynes, two Churchwardeynes, and two Wardeynes of our Ladye Aulter," is provided for, and fines for non-observance of certain of the ordinances then made were to be "employed to the Church workes of Sayncte Cuthberte." All these facts afford corroborative evidence of the power of the Corporation, in early times, in matters relating to the parish church.

From the year 1378, to the year 1581, the annual appointment of both churchwardens by the Corporation, is regularly recorded

in the proceedings of that body, on the same day (30th Sept.), when the Mayor and other municipal officers were sworn. In 1581 the corporation conceded the privilege of appointing one of the churchwardens to the parishioners, still retaining the right of appointing the other, and this custom has continued to the present time. The churchwarden annually chosen by the corporation (or rather by the Mayor, for he it was who, until recently, made the nomination) has always been a member of that body.

The following extracts from the corporate records will shew the manner of appointing churchwardens.

In the year 1459 the annual appointments of Mayor and other officers, including two churchwardens, are thus recorded :—

Eod'm die electus & assumpt' in Magr'm Comit' Well' P'dict'	Walter's Baker
Et pro Constabular' Pacis .....	{ Joh'es Powele
	{ Joh'es Gryppe
Et p' Collect' com' Reddit' .....	{ Joh'es Huchyns
	{ Robertus Welbefe
Et p' Custodib's bonor Ecol'ie.....	{ Joh'es Grene
	{ Joh'nes Brookman
Et p' CUSTODIE'S B'te MARIE.....	{ JOH'ES CHEWE, jun.
	{ JOH'ES HERBERD
Et p' Custodib's Scabell' .....	{ Joh'es Silcocke
	{ Thom'e in the Felde
	{ Joh'nes Curteyes, j'r
Et p' Custodib's vicor' .....	{ Joh'nes Befitz
	{ Ric'us Sevays
	{ Joh'es Wix

This is the first recorded appointed of wardens of the altar of the B. V. M.

In the year 1473 the appointments were more numerous, as will be seen by the following extract from the city records :—

Convocaco' gener'lis tent in crastimo Sancti Mich'is Arch' anno Regni Regis Edwardi  
iiiij ti. post conquestum xiiij mo.

Joh'es AtteWater. Ad istam Convoca' tota'. co'itate elect'	
Magr'm C'mitate hoc anno .....	Joh'es AtteWater
Et pro Constabularus hoc anno .....	{ Joh'nes Drap'
	{ Will' Penterer
Et pro Collectorib' Co's redditus hoc anno .....	{ Joh'es Tyler
	{ Joh'es Venycome
Et pro Custodib' bonor Ecol'ie P'och'is hoc anno.....	{ Joh'es Herberd.
	{ Ric'us Hugoue.
Et pro Custodib' Schabellor' hoc anno .....	{ Petrus Couley.
	{ Thom' Kene.
Et p' Custodib' bonor altaris b'te Marie hoc anno .....	{ Joh'es Josne
	{ Oth'us More
	{ Joh'es Coke
Et p' Custodib' Vicor' hoc anno .....	{ Will' London
	{ Bob'tu' Talky
	{ Joh'es Longe
Et p' Custodibus altaris S'te Trinitat' .....	{ Joh'es Bone
	{ Will. Willmot
Et p' Co'i Clerico' Comit' p'dte .....	Joh'es Beynton

In the previous year (1472), the appointments were much the same, but no name of a Town Clerk appears :—

Convocaço. Gen'alis tent. in festo St'i Mich. Aprili. anno R. B. Edwardi quarti, xiiij.

Ad ist' to. Co's eleger'nt M'rum Com'itatis hoc anno .....	Ric'us Vowell
Et p' Constabular' hoc anno .....	{ Thome Rouden
	{ Nic'um Pole
Et p' Collectodib' Co'is R'us .....	{ Will' Willmotte
	{ Joh'em Tyler
Et p' Custodibus Bonor Eccl'ie hoc anno .....	{ Joh'em Herberd
	{ Joh'em Trenunte
Et p' Custodib' Shamell' hoc anno .....	{ Joh'em Lange
	{ Joh'em Trenche
Et p' Custod' bon'r altaris b'e Marie.....	{ Joh'em Josne
	{ O'tys More
	{ Joh. Coke
Et p' Custod' Vic' hoc anno.....	{ Joh. Hoggis
	{ Joh. Ryse
	{ Walt' Baker
Et p' Custodib' Altaris S'ti. Trinitat' .....	{ Joh' Bous
	{ Joh' Cowhurd

In 1515, the appointments were increased, with the addition of a Common (or Town) Clerk, and Conduit Wardens :—

Convocaço. generalis tent. in die Sancti' Jerom' anno Regni Regis Henric' Oct. Septimo."

Eodem die tota. Com' elegerunt Magr'm .....	Joh'em Welshotte
Et pro Co' Cl'ico. Comitatus. ut pr' (Common Clerk).....	Joh'em Tyler
Et pro Constabular. Pace dict. Com'tat. ....	{ Will'm Frempton
	{ Joh'em Tyler
Et pro Guardia' Gilde S'ti Trinitati. ....	{ Joh'em Dodyne
	{ Joh'em Cole
Et pro Collectorib' Co'is Redditus.....	{ Nich'em Wyllis
	{ Robertu' Astabul
Et pro CUSTODIB' BONOR ECCL'IE .....	{ THOM. BOWE
	{ JOH'EM JONEYS, Jun.
Et pro Custodib' Altaris b'te Marie .....	{ Joh'em Coryar
	{ Will'm Bultynge
Et pro Custodib' Altaris de I'hu .....	{ Will'm Joyse
	{ Robertum Phillippes
Et pro Custodib' Altar. S'ti Kat'ine .....	{ Mag'r'm Welshotte
	{ Mag'r'm Sarger
Et pro Custodib' Altar' S'ti Anne. ....	{ Joh'em Cutte
	{ Herriou. Brynstol
Et pro Custodib' Altar' S'ti Erasmus .....	{ Joh'em Bradden
	{ Henricu. Burge
Et pro Custodib' Altar' S'ti Cruce .....	{ Thome Burges
	{ Thome Pers
Et pro Custodib' Shamellor (Shamble Wardens) .....	{ Christofer Yonge
	{ Nicu. Matthow
Et pro Custodib' Novi Conducti (Conduit Wardens) .....	{ Joh'em Barbor
	{ Nic'um Barbor
	{ Joh'em Pynner
Et pro Custodib' Vic' (Street Wardens) .....	{ Nic'um Hurle
	{ Will'm Boteler
	{ Joh'em Burges



The nominee of the Corporation is now, and has been from A.D. 1581, considered as the "Town," or In-parish Churchwarden, and the other as the "Country," or Out-parish Churchwarden. The latter is chosen exclusively by the ratepayers of the Out-parish. What were the reasons that induced the Corporation to give up to the inhabitants of the Out-parish the privilege of electing one of the churchwardens I cannot with certainty explain. Possibly the change may have been one of the results of the alteration in the forms of public worship produced by the Reformation, or it may have been caused by the necessity for raising money, by means of public assessments on the inhabitants of each parish, for the relief of the poor, for whose maintenance there was then no defined law. This is not improbable, as it is certain that many and serious disputes occurred between the "town" and the "country" with respect to the levying of the necessary sums which were required. These disputes are occasionally noticed in the city records from a period shortly after the Reformation, and continued nearly a century. In the early part of the seventeenth century the disputes became more frequent and obstinate. A few short extracts will not be out of place here.

Before the Reformation the poor were almost entirely maintained from the revenues of ecclesiastical establishments, and by means of hospitals and such like, all more or less of a somewhat religious character. After the dissolution of the monasteries, and the consequent confiscation of church property, the poor were left almost entirely destitute. Many plans were tried for raising funds for the sustenance of the poor, and among others, voluntary contributions were resorted to, but failed. In the 5th year of Queen Elizabeth an Act was passed, under which "Collectors" and "Distributors" were appointed. This plan was adopted in Wells, the records of which are found in the proceedings of the Corporation. An example, in 1567, is here given:—

"The names of those that are appoynted for the colle'con of the poore w'in the Towne of Welles, for the hole yere followynge."

High Strett .....	William Gorwaie.	Humphrie Aishe.
Chamberlen Strett .....	Richard Brewton.	
Southover .....	William Reade.	
Tucker Strett .....	Robert Horte.	

The Distributors of the same everie Sundaie,—William Goodman, Nicholas Padymore."

Another statute passed in the 41st year of Elizabeth may be regarded as the basis of our poor laws. At first the rates were

made and collected over the entire parish of St. Cuthbert. Disputes and differences became frequent by reason of the city justices not having jurisdiction over the "Out-parish," and the county justices not having jurisdiction over the "In-parish." This caused great difficulties, as rates made by the justices could not be legally enforced, because they had no distinct or separate authority in either district. The controversies are frequently noticed in the city records. The following is an instance under date 5 October, 1632 :—

"This day Mr. Mayor did propose to the companie a writinge w<sup>ch</sup> was made vpon the Statute for the reliefe of the poore, and desired the assistance of the Howse vpon the same; and because the p<sup>is</sup>he of St. Cuthberte dothe extende as well w<sup>o</sup>ute the Lib<sup>t</sup>ie of the towne as w<sup>th</sup>in; and because that p<sup>t</sup>e of the p<sup>is</sup>he w<sup>ch</sup> is w<sup>th</sup>out the Lib<sup>t</sup>ie is to be ordered by foraigne justices, and that p<sup>t</sup>e w<sup>th</sup>in the Lib<sup>t</sup>ie by the justices of the corpora<sup>co</sup>n :—The resolu<sup>co</sup>n of the companie is that my L<sup>d</sup> B<sup>p</sup>p and Doct<sup>r</sup> Wood, beinge Justices at large, shall be acquainted with the desire that the Towne hath for to raise a stooke to sett the poore of the parishes at worke, wherein they humbly desire the assistance of the said Lord B<sup>p</sup>p and Doct<sup>r</sup> Wood, and the rather because the overseers are not to divide themselves."

On the 22 July, 1641, another occurs :—

"This day it was p<sup>o</sup>sed by Mr. Robert Morgan, that one John Watts, beinge an inhabitant w<sup>th</sup>in the said Cittle of Welles, was distrayned by Phillip Ball and Mr. Thomas Meade, overseers of the poor for the countrie (the Out-parish), for the payment of a taxa<sup>co</sup>n imposed vpon them by the countrie overseers towards the reliefe of the poore that dwell owte of the Lib<sup>t</sup>ie; and that the said John Watts was likewise rated by the Churchwarden and Overseers of the Towne, for suche meanes as he hadd lykewyse w<sup>th</sup>yn the whole p<sup>is</sup>he: for w<sup>ch</sup> cause the said Meade and Ball tooke a distresse,—for the takyng of w<sup>ch</sup>e distresse th<sup>e</sup> said Watts hath brought his action ag<sup>st</sup> the saide Meade and Phillippe Ball, and thervpon it is desired by Mr. Mayor whether or no itt is fitt that the inhabitants of the saide towne wil be contributory to the said action; and thervpon itt is answered by the company here p<sup>es</sup>ent that they thinke itt is necessary that those w<sup>ch</sup>e dwell in the towne and have lande in the countrie should bee conferrd w<sup>th</sup>all to knowe theire opinions thereon."

At length an appeal was made for a decision to the Court of Quarter Sessions, and ultimately the present practice of levying rates was introduced and has continued ever since.

In early times the churchwardens, as such, had considerable possessions, most, if not all of which came to the Corporation with other property which before the Reformation had belonged to the chantries in the church of St. Cuthbert. The following is a translation of a grant for the use of the church, upwards of 500 years ago. The original remains with the corporate records, and it will be observed that the gift is made, not to the churchwardens alone, but to the Mayor, Wardens, and the Commonalty of the Borough.

"To all the faithful in Christ to whom this present writing shall come,—Christian be Devenyshe greeting in the Lord. Know ye that I have in my pure widow-

hood, and my full power, remised, released, and for me and my heirs for ever, have quit claim to John called the Roper, Steward [or Mayor] of the Borough of Wells, Ad[am] de Scoepetone, and William Koksone, keepers of the goods of the church of Saint Cuthbert in Wells, and all the Commonalty of the same Borough, of all my right and claim which I have, or hereafter in any manner may have in one tenement, and five shops adjoining to the same with all their appurtenances in Wells, in the county of Somerset; which tenement is situate in the street which is called Grope Lane, on the eastern side of the same street; and the said five shops are situate in the eastern side of the said street called Grope Lane, as far as the tenement which was late of Richard Goly during his life; so that neither I, the said Christina, nor my heirs, nor any other persons in our name, shall assert any manner of right or claim to the said tenement and five shops with their appurtenances in any wise; And that we are excluded from all action and remedy of right by this present writing for ever. And I, the aforesaid Christina and my heirs, all the said tenement, and all the said five shops with their appurtenances to the said John the Roper, Ad. and William, and all the Commonalty of the said Borough and their successors will warrant, acquit, and against all persons for ever defend. In witness whereof to this present writing I have affixed my seal [in the presence of] these witnesses, John de Wyke, Lord of Milton, Thomas de Panes, Henry Tonere, Roger le Boteler, Hugh de Capell, William de Aston, John de Pokelchurch, Walter at Wyche, John at Stone, Walter de Somerton, William le Touker, de Wokyhole, and others: And forasmuch as my seal is unknown, to many persons, I have procured the official seal of the Exchequer of the Bishop of Bath and Wells to be affixed. GIVEN at Wells, the 24th day of the Month of April, in the twenty second year of the reign of King Edward the third, after the conquest" [A. D. 1347].

Before the Reformation the churchwardens had certain perquisites, or fees, as will be seen from the following extract from the proceedings of the Corporation, in 1505:—

"Also tis ordeyned at this sayd assemblee of the xxiiij, that from hensforthe, suche p'sons, as well of the towne, as of the Oute-paryshe, as shal yerelye be elected churchewardeynge, shal occupye that office, takynge for his labor and wages noe man'er of thyng as they be wont to p'ceyve and have yerelye; but the same money shall alwey from hensforthe be employed to churche workes, and to ye use of ye churche."

After the Reformation, the "Town" churchwarden, though he had certain small official fees, yet he had no settled stipend until 1719. In that year the Corporation "Ordered that the Receiver pays the next churchwarden, five pounds, towards defraying the expenses of his office." This stipend continued to be paid for many years, but it subsequently ceased. In 1791, the Corporation renewed the order of 1719, and this payment continued until 1866, when the usual appointment was made, but without any salary, and the same course is still pursued.

The Charter obtained by the Corporation from Queen Elizabeth in 1589, continued the right of election, in all future times, yearly, forever, of all such officers as the corporate body had or been theretofore accustomed to have, and such officers were to be sworn before the Mayor for the time being, for the faithful execution of their duties.

Wells did not escape the disturbances and troubles prevalent in

the time of James II. The City Charters were seized by the King, who granted a charter of his own, which very seriously curtailed the privileges of the inhabitants. For a time the corporate body ceased to hold their usual periodical meetings, and no records were needed or made. Immediately before the flight of King James, he, hoping to regain the favourable opinion of his subjects, restored most of the Charters he had unconstitutionally set aside, (including those of Wells), but this act of grace came too late. The Prince and Princess of Orange were soon proclaimed in Wells as King and Queen of England, and then many of the old customs were revived, and local order was again, to a great extent, restored. On the 30 September, 1689, the following appointments are recorded :

"This day Mr. John Davis, Mayor-elect, was sworn Mayor of this City for the year ensuing, having first taken all the oaths required by law.

"This day Mr. Nicholas Paynter, the late Mayor, was likewise sworn Justice of the City, for the year ensuing, having first taken the oaths required by law.

The Mayor hath chosen for his Constable ... ..	Mr. Philip Evans
The House hath chosen for Constable ... ..	Mr. Hippisley
Mr. Mayor has chosen for his Receiver ... ..	Cornelius Hale
Mr. Mayor hath chosen for his Sergeant ... ..	Robert Taylor
The House hath chosen for their Sergeant ... ..	John Alexander
The Mayor hath chosen for his Renter... ..	Robert Bayley
The House hath chosen for their Renter ... ..	John Collins
THE MAYOR HATH CHOSEN FOR CHURCHWARDEN ... ..	SIMON PLAISTER
Into the Office of Shamble Wardens ... ..	{ William Taverner
	{ William Watkins
Into the Office of Conduit Wardens ... ..	{ John Lovell, junr
	{ Humph. Bisse
	{ John Lovell, senr
Street Wardens... ..	{ Wm. Barnett
	{ John Plumbly
	{ Thos. Lane"

It will be observed (as has already been noticed) that the Corporation, as a body, did not elect the churchwarden. On the contrary he was "chosen" by the Mayor for the time being, and that custom continued down to the time of the passing of the Corporation Reform Act in 1834, the record of the appointment being in the same words, as the following extract will prove.

On the 30th September, 1834, the record of the annual appointments was as follows :

Robert Brooks, Esquire, pursuant to his election of Monday, the 15th instant, was sworn Mayor of this city for the year ensuing, the Act against Bribery and Corruption having been first read, and he having also made and subscribed the declaration, and taken the oaths required by law.

Francis Besley, Esquire, one of the Masters of this city, was chosen and sworn Justice of the Peace for this city, having first made and subscribed the declaration and taken the oaths required by law.

The Mayor hath chosen for his Constable	... ..	Mr. Adam Plowman
The House hath chosen	... ..	Mr. William Perkins
The Mayor hath chosen for Receiver	... ..	Mr. John Hoare
The Mayor hath chosen for his Renter	... ..	Mr. Jos. Dix
The House hath chosen	... ..	Mr. Samuel Lavington
THE MAYOR HATH CHOSEN FOR CHURCHWARDEN	...	Mr. JOHN HAUGHTON
The House has chosen for Surveyors	...	Mr. Berryman
	...	Mr. Tho. Lax
	...	Mr. John Lovell
The Mayor hath chosen for Sergeant at Mace	...	Mr. Ab'm Buck
The House hath chosen	... ..	Mr. Samuel Smith
The House hath chosen for Bailiff of the Bailiwick and		
Clerk of the Market	... ..	Ab'm Buck
Day Bellman	... ..	Benj'n Brooks
Night Bellman	... ..	James Sims
Conduit Wardens	...	Jos. Dix
	...	Geo. Lawrence
	...	Jas. Chester
Street Wardens	...	Tho. Wear
	...	Benj'n Brooks
	...	James Sims
Street Wardens	... ..	James Sims
Beadle	... ..	James Sims

The accounts of the churchwardens, in early times, were under the supervision of the Corporation, as will be seen in the following extract from the proceedings of the corporate body, in 1566.

"M'd that the 9th daie of October, Robert Norton, and Symon Mersfelde, Churchwardaynes, have made and fynyshe ther accompte before the p'ishe, and vpon the determinaçon therof, the coi'altie and the churche are for all man'er of dewties and accompts clere and dyscharged, as by the foots of ther accompte more at large it may appere."

In the year 1497, Nicholas Trappe being Mayor, was re-elected in 1501 and 1502; and in 1503 he became one of the M.P.'s for the city. During his time, the following curious entry (translated from the original latin, occurs:—

"The Master and Burgesses, with one assent, give to Nicholas Trappe, general power to enquire in whose hands monies and goods of the church, and the Commonalty of Wells are and unjustly detained; viz., the monies coming before this time from the "Robynhode," the dancing girls, the Common Church Ale, and the like; and also of the goods and monies in any way detained from the Commonalty, in whose hands they are, and further to write down the names of those who have such goods and monies with the sums," &c.

This Nicholas Trappe received and entertained Henry VII. in 1498, on his return with an army of 30,000 men, from the west, where he had met and defeated Perkin Warbeck.

In 1644 a circumstance occurred, which proves that the Corporation had the power of expelling, as well as electing their churchwarden. The record is as follows:—

"Forasmuche as the persons here present (the Corporation) doe all thinke fitt that Thomas Brinte, the newe Churchwarden, shuld bee putte owte of his place because hee hath comitted wilful murder vpon the body of Thomas Foster, and founde guilty by the Coroner's inquest: Itt is therefore ordered that hee shal noe longer continue in that office, but that some other discrete and honest [person]

shal be elected and sworn for the new execucon of the said office; whervpon the p'sons here present have elected and chosen Hugh Merefields, of Welles aforesaid, Chaundler, to execute the office of churchwarden for the p'she of St. Cuthberte, in Welles aforesaid, in the place of the saide Thomas Brinte, for the residue of the tyme to come."

In 1805, the Corporation resolved that the churchwarden, though elected on the 30th November, should not take office until the following Easter, and this resolution is still in force.

The earliest of the books containing the records of the proceedings of the Corporation of Wells, begins, as has already been stated, in 1378, from which period there is almost a continuous record of the annual appointments of Mayors and other municipal officers, as well as of Churchwardens. In a deed dated A.D. 1362, Nicholas Cristisham occurs as one of the churchwardens. He was a considerable benefactor to the city, having by deed, dated 17 November, 1394, granted to Thomas Hore, the then Master (or Mayor), and the Commonalty of Wells, fourteen messuages, three tofts, and 22s. rent (all in Wells), for the better support of the same Commonalty forever. This Nicholas Cristisham was Mayor of Wells in 1378, 1382, 1385, 1388, and 1390. The following "Roll" is compiled from the yearly record of the appointment of corporate and other officers elected by the corporate body.

## ROLL OF CHURCHWARDENS APPOINTED BY THE CORPORATION OF WELLS.

1378—John Churchstyle	1390—John Clothere
John Pestel	John Vykeres
79—The same	91—John Clothere
80—John Newmaister	John Rouberwe
Robert Webbe	92—The same
81—John Churchstyle	93—John Clothere
Stephen Say	John Roubergh
82—John Churchstyle	94—The same
John Clothere	95—The same
83—John Newmaister	96—The same
Thomas Say	97—The same
84—John Wode	98—The same
John Churchstyle	99—The same
85—John Atte Wode	1400—Robert Baker
John Vykeres	John Roubergh
86—Thomas Say	1—The same
Richard Gros	2—John Roubergh
87—The same	John Glasyer
88—John Stoke	3—John Roubergh
Stephen Wydsore (or Synderys)	Walter Clerk
89—John Atte Wode	4—Robert Baker
John Vykeres	Walter Clerke

- 1405—John Bonberw  
       John Glasier  
 6—The same  
 7—Robert Baker  
       John Glasier  
 8—The same  
 9—John Glasier  
       Edward Wylde  
 10—Richard Gussage  
       Richard Trote  
 11—Edward Wylde  
       Robert Syvier  
 12—Philip Porter  
       Edward Wylde  
 13—The same  
 14—The same  
 15—The same  
 16—William Weye  
       Edward Wylde  
 17—William Peynto  
       William Weye  
 18—The same  
 19—William Peynto  
       Edward Wylde  
 20—Edward Wylde  
       John Williams  
 21—Edward Wylde  
       John Hulett  
 22—John Hope  
       John Hulet  
 23—John Hervey  
       John Hulet  
 24—The same  
 25—John Harvey  
       Edward Waxmaker  
 26—The same  
 27—Edward Waxmaker  
       John Mower  
 28—The same  
 29—John Mower  
       Robert Tayllor  
 30—John Mower  
       Robert Trylle  
 31—Henry Selwode  
       John Tayllor  
 32—Richard Seklynge  
       Thomas Stawe  
 33—Robert Joyce  
       Robert Vickery  
 34—The same  
 35—Robert Vickery  
       Robert Joyce  
 36—Robert Vickery  
       William Beaufy  
 37—Robert Vickery  
       William Beaufuy  
 38—William Sely  
       John Curteys  
 39—William Weye  
       John Curteys

- 1440—  
 41—John Trappe  
       Richard Wylly  
 42—John Byllyng  
       Richard Wylly  
 43—John Byllyng  
       Richard Clyve  
 44—John Sadelere  
 (Mayor of Wells 1471-2. In 1509 he gave  
 the citizens a parcel of land at Burn-  
 ham. 26 Jan. 33 Hen. VI., he was  
 elected one of the M.P.'s for Wells.)  
       William Canyngton  
 45—John Chew  
       John Sadelere  
 46—John Chewe  
       Henry Baylly  
 47—The same  
 48—Robert Thornbury  
       John Cryps  
 49—The same  
 50—Roger Kyte  
       Richard Rikars (or Baker)  
 51—Richard Seward  
       Roger Kyte  
 52—The same  
 53—John Bulgeon  
       Richard Seward  
 54—John Bulgeon  
       John Huchyns  
 55—William Pryour  
       John Huchyns  
 56—Henry Clerke  
       Richard Cogan  
 57—Robert Welbefe  
       Henry Clerke  
 58—John Brokeman  
       John Grene  
 59—The same  
 60—Walter Clerke  
       John Grene  
 61—Thomas Perrisson  
       John Grene  
 62—The same  
 63—John Grene  
       Richard Wylde  
 64—John Herberd  
       Richard Wylde  
 65—John Herberd  
       Thomas Hywode  
 66—William Bury  
       John Herberd  
 67—William Bury  
       Thomas Felde  
 68—John House  
       John Chywe  
 69—William Wylmote  
 (Owner and occupier of the Swan Hotel  
 many years).  
       John Chywe

- 1470—William Wylmote  
Thomas Hampton
- 71—Robert Canyngton  
Thomas Mora
- 72—John Harberd  
John Trenaunte
- 73—The same
- 74—John Harberd  
Richard Hugowe
- 75—John Josne  
Ootavius Barbor
- 76—John Josne  
Stephen More
- 77—William Brigges  
John Smythe
- 78—Thomas Flemynge  
John Lynge
- 79—Thomas Sewarde  
Robert Draper
- 80—John Mayne  
Thomas Kene
- 81—The same
- 82—William Skynner  
John Seyver
- 83—The same
- 84—John Bone  
William Wilbef
- 85—John Goldwegge  
William Wade
- 86—William Tanner  
William Wade
- 87—John Petyte  
William Knyghte
- 88—Nicholas Draper  
John Petyte
- 89—John Jonys  
(No second name).
- 90—Thomas Bethom  
Robert Staynor
- 91—John Clemente  
Robert Steynor
- 92—Richard AtteWater  
Robert Steynor
- 93—Richard AtteWater  
John Dedynges
- 94—John Orchard  
(Jno. Orchard was one (probably the first)  
of the benefactors to the Taylors' Com-  
pany, in Wells. He gave property of  
considerable value for the use of "poor  
Taylors" of Wells. He was one of the  
wardens of the Altar of the Holy  
Trinity of Hen. VII.)  
John Elye
- 95—John Orchard  
Richard Ginchin
- 96—John Orchard  
Thomas Aphowell
- 97—Richard Herte  
John Piten
- 1498—John Desseford  
John Burnell
- 99—John Welshot  
John Burnell
- 1500—William Frempton  
William Wade
- 1—William Frempton  
Richard Merryfylde
- 2—John Pomerey  
Robert Steynor
- 3—Richard Hugow  
Thomas Hethfield
- 4—Richard Steyner  
Thomas Clyve
- 5—Robert Steyner  
Thomas Clyve
- 6—William Lynges  
John Seward
- 7—William Brodyer  
Henry Brynscombe
- 8—William Wether  
William Wyghte
- 9—John Consey  
John Lyne
- 10—William Whylye  
John Lenge
- 11—John Tanner  
Richard Smythe
- 12—John Davy  
Henry Dodyne
- 13—Richard Whitley  
Thomas Lewys  
(Mayor of Wells in 1528, 1529, 1546, 1551,  
1552, 1556, and 1557).
- 14—Robert Ev'ard  
John Jonys  
(Mayor of Wells in 1532, 1538, and 1549).
- 15—Thomas Bowe  
John Joneys, jun.
- 16—Robert Ev'ard  
John Jonys
- 17—John Gay  
Robert Ev'ard
- 18—William Sabyne  
(Mayor of Wells in 1524 and 1526)  
William Joyse
- 19—John Godwyn  
Robert Ev'ard
- 20—The same
- 21—William Bury  
William Butteler, jun.
- 22—Walter Stride  
William Goode
- 23—John Palle  
William Goode
- 24—William Bury  
John Meryfylde
- 25—William Bury  
William Merchante
- 26—William Dean



- 1526—William Ricarde  
 27—William Bultynge  
     Robert Cobbe, (or Cowes)  
 28—No appointments recorded  
 29—John Godwyn  
 (Mayor of Wells 1540, 1541, 1543, 1550,  
 and 1556. M.P. for the City 1538,  
 1541, 1547, and 1553).  
     Henry Calbury  
 30—Thomas Cornysh  
     Henry Pall  
 31—John Gyles  
     John Marler  
 32—John Apowell  
     Richard Tyke  
 33—Thomas Lewes  
     William Cheryton, de Wyke  
 34—William Bulman  
     William Yevan  
 35—Richard Frampton  
     John Geles de Powlesham  
 36—Robert Tayllor  
     William Cheryton.  
 37—Tristram M'che  
     Nicholas Lane  
 38—Walter Wall  
     Richard Foxe  
 39—Lodwick Whyte  
     Walter Paynter de Burcot  
 40—Samuel Edwards  
     Henry Cocks  
 41—Samuel Deverell (or Seward)  
     Samuel Edwards  
 42—Richard a Cary  
     Richard Galyngton  
 43—George Wylmot  
     Thomas Gybbes  
 44—William Godwyn  
     John Heth  
 (Town Clerk of Wells 27 Hen. VIII).  
 45—Edward Negett  
     Thomas Plumley  
 46—Robert Heth  
     John Gibbs  
 47—William Gonn  
     Edward Bath  
 48—John Porter  
     John Hall, de Burcot  
 49—Thomas Myles  
     Thomas Hixe, de Wodford  
 50—Robert Wiseman  
     William Merchant  
 51—John Burges  
     William Buxton  
 52—John Yevans  
     John Richards  
 53—Roger Aumere  
     Richard Meryfield  
 54—Thomas Brynell  
     John Butler  
 1555—Thomas Kyng  
     Elfridus Upton  
 56—Thomas Pratt  
     William Lovell  
 57—Richard Gwyn  
     John Bultyng  
 58—Bartholomew Hagat  
     Robert Cocks  
 59—William Howper  
     Thomas Matthewe  
 60—William Smyth, Capper.  
     John Huchens  
 61—Nicholas Pademore  
     Robert Casbard  
 62—Thomas Isak  
     (No second appointment).  
 63—Walter Gorwaye  
     John Marler  
 64—William Lewes, Baker  
     John Hall  
 65—Robert Norton  
     (No second appointment).  
 66—Nicholas Instrigge  
     (No second appointment).  
 67—Thomas Parsons  
     (No second appointment).  
 68—John Kynge  
     John Mylle  
 69—Thomas Buttermer  
     John Cokes  
 70—John Levett  
     John Bukstone  
 71—Anthony Wilcox  
     William Beaumond  
 72—John Denbye  
     John Webbe  
 73—Robert Selhay  
     John Pyrryniter  
 74—John Budge  
     Edward Horte  
 75—Nicholas Butler  
     Henry Foxe  
 76—Edward Brangwell  
     John Brook  
 77—Robert Webbe  
     William Reade  
 78—Thomas Bylston  
     John Loxton  
 79—William Williams  
     Thomas Taylor  
 80—William Gorway  
     John Chesman  
 81—Richard Alford  
     John Kytchen  
 82—Robert Sharpe  
     (No second appointment after this date.)  
 83—Francis Lumbre  
 84—Thomas Brodrybbe  
 85—Richard Anstice  
 86—Edward Morgan

- 1587—Robert Hill  
 88—Robert Smythe  
 89—John Ames  
 90—William Peek  
 91—John Jefferis  
 92—Robert Bredebere  
 93—Humphrey Palmer  
 94—Richard Cole  
 95—Henry Foster  
 (Mayor of Wells 1621, 1629, 1633, 1638, (From 1665 to 1686 no appointments are recorded).  
 and 1645).  
 96—Maurice Robynson  
 97—John Baylye, Cutler  
 98—John Hole  
 99—Richard Maundrie  
 1600—Hugh Robynson  
 1—Vertue Hunt  
 2—John Antheny  
 3—William Alford  
 4—William Attwell  
 5—Richard Holbrooke  
 6—Robert Creese  
 7—John Totterdell  
 8—John Burtone  
 9—Peter Morgan  
 10—Thomas Norris  
 11—John Raines  
 12—John Wookey  
 13—William Ellis  
 14—Valentine Ludwell  
 15—Joseph Hill  
 16—Thomas Wensley  
 17—Thomas Latchford  
 18—Walter Bricke  
 Mayor of Wells 1634. Founder of Bricke's Almshouse).  
 19—John Coxe  
 20—Jurden Bisse  
 21—John Coke  
 22—(No appointment recorded).  
 23—Edward Barloe  
 24—Edward Christopher  
 25—Edward Huiah *als* Clarke  
 26—John Sadler  
 27—William West  
 28—Thomas Shattocke  
 29—James Coke  
 30—Robert Thomas  
 31—Peter Sandford  
 32—John Hoggins  
 33—William Smith  
 34—Richard Frior  
 35—Robert Hall  
 36—John Hill  
 37—Robert Rowley  
 38—Edward Brownings  
 39—Matthew Pecke  
 40—Robert Hurman  
 41—John Coke  
 42—John Hodgkeys  
 1643—Thomas Brinte  
 (From 1644 to 1661, no recorded appointments are known to exist, and probably none were made).  
 61—John Walter (expelled, and Ralph Counners elected in his place).  
 62—William Fettiplace  
 63—Thomas Smith  
 64—Valentine Dorset  
 (From 1665 to 1686 no appointments are recorded).  
 87—Joseph Gallington  
 88—Robert Bayley  
 89—John Playster  
 90—John Collins  
 91—John Thacker  
 92—William Holbrooke  
 93—The same  
 94—Joseph Gallington  
 95—Archibald Harper  
 (Mayor of Wells 1702. Founder of the Woolcombers' Almshouse).  
 96—William Merifield  
 97—William Horsey  
 98—R. Thomas  
 99—William Nix  
 1700—Thomas Arney  
 1—Abraham Willis  
 2—James Thomas  
 3—Thomas Baron  
 4—Edward Slade  
 5—William Haines  
 6—Thomas Merchant  
 7—John Sevier  
 8—William Salmon  
 (Mayor of Wells 1675, 1683, 1694, 1700, 1715, 1722, 1729).  
 9—William Babson  
 10—The same  
 11—John West  
 12—William Baron  
 13—Abraham Mogg  
 14—Charles Taylor  
 15—Richard Cupper  
 16—Robert Taylor  
 17—Charles Baron  
 18—John Pearce  
 19—John Paine, junr.  
 20—John Browne  
 21—Robert Haines  
 22—Hodges Cooke  
 23—Abraham Parsons  
 24—William Sever  
 25—Henry Hellard  
 26—Simon Collins  
 27—John Nix  
 28—William Chester  
 29—Thomas Parfitt  
 30—Anthony Sevier  
 31—John Sutton

- 1782—William Higgins  
 33—Robert Strode  
 34—William Keate  
 35—The same  
 36—George Moor  
 37—Francis Thacker  
 38—Robert Francis  
 39—Charles Penny  
 40—The same  
 41—The same  
 42—Joseph Kerle  
 43—William Nicholls  
 44—Thomas Miller  
 45—Francis Paine  
 46—James Parfitt  
 47—Joseph Bacon  
 48—The same  
 49—Joseph Lovell  
 50—John Haines  
 51—Charles Tudway  
 52—William Rood  
 53—James Flood  
 54—Richard Sutton  
 55—Thomas Millard  
 56—Clement Tudway  
 57—Robert Jeffrey  
 58—James York  
 59—George Hopkins  
 60—George Moore  
 61—Joseph Bacon  
 62—John Haines  
 63—Charles Tudway, jun.  
 64—Charles Bacon  
 65—John Alford  
 66—John Brook  
 67—George Lax  
 68—John Nash  
 69—Charles Tudway, jun.  
 70—Charles Tudway  
 71—Robert Lax  
 72—John Nash  
 73—William Miller  
 74—John Lovell  
 75—Isaac White  
 76—John Rocks  
 77—William Young  
 78—The same  
 (John Alford, chosen 7 Jan. 1779, in place  
 of William Young, deceased.)  
 79—George Lax  
 80—The same  
 81—John Porch, jun.  
 82—Robert Willmott  
 83—The same  
 84—John Nash  
 85—The same  
 86—Charles Bacon  
 87—Edward Goldesborough  
 88—William Pulsford  
 89—Joseph Teak

- 1790—John Holloway, Esq.  
 91—The same  
 92—George Lovell  
 93—Robert Woollams  
 94—The same  
 95—Robert Lax  
 96—Edward Spencer  
 97—The same  
 98—John Watts  
 (John Watts being employed in H.M.  
 Service, George Say was elected in his  
 place, August 27th, 1799).  
 99—John Nash  
 1800—John Paine Tudway, Esq.  
 1—The same  
 2—John Porch  
 3—Robert Willmott  
 4—Robert Brooks  
 5—Henry Brooks  
 6—Maurice Davies  
 7—Charles Bacon  
 8—Charles Hyde  
 9—Stephen Davies  
 10—John Lovell  
 11—Charles Delamotte Mathias  
 12—George Biggs Lax  
 13—Francis Besley  
 14—Henry Hope  
 15—Robert Wollams  
 16—John Hoare  
 17—George Bacon  
 18—The same  
 19—Richard Vaughan  
 20—Stephen Davies  
 21—George Biggs Lax  
 22—William Chester Berryman  
 23—Robert Davies  
 24—Joseph Lovell Lovell  
 25—John Snelgrove  
 26—Henry Giffard  
 27—George Bacon  
 28—Robert Welsh  
 29—John Nicholls  
 30—Adam Plowman  
 31—Joseph Wollams  
 32—The same  
 33—John Jerrard  
 34—John Haughton  
 35—James Everdell Appleyard  
 36—John Fry  
 37—James Garrod  
 38—Edward Rolle  
 39—Joseph Parsons  
 40—Samuel Hobbs  
 41—Joseph Smith  
 42—Albion Andrews  
 43—Robert Dempster  
 44—William C. Berryman, jun.  
 45—Henry Bernard  
 46—John Giffard Everett

1847—Henry Powell  
 48—The same  
 49—Henry W. Livett  
 50—James Garrod  
 51—William Fry  
 52—The same  
 53—John Willmott  
 54—The same  
 55—The same  
 56—The same  
 57—Edwin Hippisley  
 58—The same  
 59—Richard Maggs

1860—The same  
 61—Joseph Parsons  
 62—Joseph J. Tasker  
 63—The same  
 64—The same  
 65—John Kelway  
 66—The same  
 67—William Dore  
 68—The same  
 69—The same  
 70—Francis Fry  
 71—The same  
 72—The same

### THE MAYOR'S CHAPLAIN.

The circumstances connected with the origin of the pension of £7 6s. 8d. at present paid by the Corporation of Wells out of their common funds, are somewhat singular and not generally known. In the earliest periods of the municipal history of Wells, the corporate body were often noticed as a "Gild," and there can be no doubt that during a very long period, down to the date of the Reformation, the constitution of the Corporation partook, as has already been observed, very much of the character of a religious society. Gilds were societies sometimes living in common together, and sometimes joined together in a body for some public purpose, or performing some public duties or functions. During the predominance of the Roman Catholic forms of worship, almost everything was in some way or other mixed up with religion. Of this, from what has already been said, the Corporation of Wells formed a striking illustration. Most societies of this kind had a priest, or chaplain; often more than one, either wholly or partially maintained and paid from the common revenues. There are notices of this in the city records early in the thirteenth century, and traces of it will be observed in other parts of this book.

At a meeting of the corporation on the 5th of February, 1466, a grant was made to Thomas Clyve, chaplain, of an annual salary of eight marks, (£5 6s. 8d.), and a tenement and garden, before then in the possession of Thomas Coke, chaplain, situate in Priston Row, on condition that he continued to celebrate mass at the altar of the B. V. Mary in the church of Saint Cuthbert, and keep the same house in good repair. This pension is no doubt the same as that mentioned in the foundation deed of Thomas Tanner's Chantry, already quoted.

In 1497 the following appointment is recorded in the proceedings of the Corporation:—

“M. JOH'NES BLAKEDON.”

“At this Convocacon the Maister and his brothers, w<sup>th</sup> th<sup>r</sup> assente and consent of all the burgesses, have demised and graunted vnto Maister John Blakedon, beyng now our Lady P<sup>ste</sup>, and occupyng a S<sup>v</sup>yce, foundyd at the Awter of our Blessed Lady the Virgyne, in the paryshe churche of Seynte Cuthberte, at Welles, a tenemente w<sup>th</sup> a gardyne annexed to the same, sette in a strete called P<sup>ste</sup>ten-rowe, in whiche ten<sup>te</sup> the saide John now dwelleth and occupyeth; To have and to hold vnto the saide John as long as he occupieth the saide chaunt<sup>e</sup> and s<sup>v</sup>ice of our Ladye, and when it shal happen the same s<sup>v</sup>ice to be voyde, vnto all and ev<sup>ry</sup> other p<sup>ste</sup> to be admytted vnto the same s<sup>v</sup>yce or chauntrye, vnto the ende and terme of lxxxx yeres, then nexte and immediately following to be fully complete and ended, withowte any man<sup>r</sup> of rente therfore yeldyng or payng; p<sup>vy</sup>dyd ev<sup>er</sup>more that they and eynche of them occupyng the saide s<sup>v</sup>yce of our Ladye, shall suffyciently repayre, susteyne, and menteyne the saide ten<sup>te</sup>, w<sup>th</sup> th<sup>r</sup> app<sup>t</sup>ences at theire owne p<sup>er</sup> costs and expences duryng the saide terme of lxxxx yeres: And moreover bycause of the grete costes and expences in byldyng, whiche the saide John Blakedon hath don and 'complyshed in and vpon the saide ten<sup>te</sup> w<sup>th</sup> th<sup>r</sup> app<sup>t</sup>ences, as it is reported, to the value of £xxx, and more, as in the same ten<sup>te</sup> the acts therof doth appere; and also for a s<sup>t</sup>eyne sume of money whiche the said John Blakedon intendeth w<sup>th</sup> effect to take and delyver to the com<sup>on</sup> coffre, the Maister and his brethrene, wyth all the burgesses havynge goode mynde of the saide costs and expences in byldyng of the saide ten<sup>te</sup>, and also of the sum<sup>e</sup> of money which he intendeth to delyver to the com<sup>on</sup> coffre, wyllynge therfore to geve vnto the saide John Blakedon thanks, and also to do for hym and frends, a plesor as followeth; whereupon at this conv<sup>a</sup>con the saide Maister, by the assente of his brothers, and burgesses, by these presents byndeth hymselfe and his successours, Maisters of this Cyte of Welles hereafter for the tyme beyng, that at the next avoydance or adwoson of the saide chauntrye, or S<sup>v</sup>yce of our Ladye, the Maister of the Cyte of Welles for the tyme thereafter beyng, shall geve alwayes vnto ev<sup>ry</sup> suche p<sup>ste</sup>, at his admyssyon in the saide s<sup>v</sup>yce, an oth vpon a boke, that in his *Secundo memento*, at his masse dayly, to commende and p<sup>ry</sup> for, the sowles of John Blakedon, John Byche, Will<sup>m</sup> Chylde, for ther faders' and moders' sowles, and for all the sowles of them that he wull have to be prayde for and for alle crysten sowles, w<sup>th</sup> a p<sup>er</sup> collecte, secrete and post comon'. For whiche oth and charge so to be geven at the admyssyon of ev<sup>ry</sup> suche p<sup>ste</sup> in the saide s<sup>v</sup>yce duryng the saide terme of lxxxx yeres, the Maister of this Cyte for the tyme beyng, shall p<sup>re</sup>ceave and have in the feste of Seynte Michell th<sup>r</sup> Archangell, at the awter of our Ladye, in the tyme of matens, viij, payde alweye by the hande of the rent getherer of the com<sup>on</sup> lyfode of Welles, duryng the saide terme, that is to wyte, of the saide sume of money which John Blakedon intendeth and wull delyver to the saide com<sup>on</sup> coffre: And also at this convo<sup>con</sup> it is graunted that the saide Ten<sup>te</sup> and gardyne with th<sup>r</sup> app<sup>t</sup>ences shal be approp<sup>ed</sup> and annexed by suffycient wrytyng vnto the sayde chauntrye and s<sup>v</sup>yce of our Ladye, and to ev<sup>ry</sup> p<sup>ste</sup> occupyng the same s<sup>v</sup>yce duryng the saide lxxxx yeres; p<sup>vy</sup>dyd always that ev<sup>ry</sup>one of the saide priestes called our Lady priestes, and occupyng the same s<sup>v</sup>yce in man<sup>r</sup> and forme afore rehersed, shuld not, nor non of theym shal in no wyse take, or g<sup>nte</sup> the saide ten<sup>te</sup> and gardyne, nor non p<sup>cell</sup> therof, to any p<sup>son</sup> or p<sup>sons</sup> duryng the saide terme, but they and ev<sup>ry</sup> eche of them shal dwell and be resydente vpon the same ten<sup>te</sup> w<sup>th</sup> th<sup>r</sup> app<sup>t</sup>ences, keypyng and obseryng the charge and observances aforesayde,”

The Corporation maintained a second priest, who seems not to have had an official residence, though his yearly stipend was the same in amount as that paid to the other. These facts will

be seen in the following extract from the survey of Chantries, &c., made 1 Edward I. (A.D. 1547), from which I have already quoted:—

"The salarye of too Stipendarye Priestes celebratyng w'in the sayde churche, is yerely worthe in redy money to be levied and receyved of the issues revenues, and profects of the landes and ten'ts belonginge to the saide Maister and Comynalte, viz., to either Priest for his salarie yerely cxlijs. iiijd., to be paid by th'handes of the receyver of the revenues of the saide landes,—£xi. vis. viiij.

Plate and Ornam'ts,—None.

Memorand.—The Incumbents names be not presented. It is presented that ther is no foundaçon of theis ij Priestes, but they have been kept from tyme to tyme of the devoçon of the saide M'r and Comynalte to mynystre in the saide churche, for that the Cure is verray greate."

To this, no doubt, may be traced the present payment by the Corporation to one of the curates of the parish, the "cure" being then, as it is now, "verray greate."

The Act authorizing this survey, vested in the King the lands and income of all Chantries, free-chapels, &c., which had been in existence within five years next before the first year of the King's reign, as well as all such Chantries, lands, and income granted in perpetuity for the finding of any priest, and whereby any such priest had been maintained, within the same period, and which had not, under previous Acts, come into the possession of Henry VIII. Under the Act of Edward VI., the two pensions referred to were claimed for the use of the King, and but for a special provision in that statute, would have been hopelessly forfeited. The act, however, contained a clause to the effect that it should not be prejudicial to the Corporation of any City or Borough, or affect any of the lands or possessions belonging to such City or Borough. The corporate body soon availed themselves of this saving clause by representing the circumstances to the Court of Augmentations, and prayed to be discharged from liability to continue the payments to the Crown. A special commission was issued, and the facts subsequently reported by the commissioners. At length the prayer of the petition was granted, as appears by the "Discharge," still remaining with the city records, of which the following is a copy:—

"Edwardus Sixtus Dei gra' Angl' Franc' et Hib'ni. Rex fidei defensor, and in t'ra eccl'ie Anglican' and Hibn' Sup'm Caput. Omnib' ad quos presentes l're p'nerunt Salt'm. Inspecimus inf' recorda' and Irrotl' Our' Augmentaçon and reven' coron' n're quoddam decretum p' Cancellar' and gen'ales Sup'sores ejusdem cur' in hec verba. Memorand.—Where the Maister and Comynalte of the Towne of Welles, in the countie of Soms, have exhibyted a Byll of Peticion vnto the Chauncellor and Gen'all Surveyor of the Courte of the Augmentaçons and revenues of the King's Crowne complaynyng that where hit was p'sented before the Kyng's Commissioners for the survey of all Colleges, Free-Chapels, and Chauntries w'in the

saide Countie of Some, geven to the Kyng's Majestie by auctoritie of p'lyment holden at Westm' in the fyrste year of the reigne of our Sou'aighe Kyng Edward the Sixte, amongs' others, that there were two Stypendarie Preests founden in the P'yshe Ohurche of Seynt Cuthberte, in Wells, aforesaide of a longe tyme: And that ev'y of the saide Stypendarie Preests have hadde yerelye for their sev'all stypends, or salaries, fyve pounds, thirteene shyllinges and fower pence, paide of the rents of the same Towne, and that they have no foundaçon, nor p'p'tie, but have ben kepte there from tyme to tyme, of longe tyme, only of devocyon, for that the Cure of the saide paryshe ys very greate, as by the C'tificat therof remaynyng of recorde in the saide Courte apperith: And bycause there appered insufficient matter to entytile the kyng to the saide salaries, or stypends, the saide Maister and Co'ialtie have desyred in the saide peticyon to be exon'ated and dyscharged of the payment of the saide sev'all salaries, or pensions of £v xiiij. iiij., for the saide two Stypendarie Preestes, to the Kynges vse: Whervppon the saide Chauncellor and gen'all Surveyors of the saide courte, wyllynge to have farder inquirye for the Kyng to be made conc'nyng the saide salaries, awarded a comysion vnder the greate seale of the saide courte, vnto divers gentylmen of the said countie of Som't, vppon c'ten int'rogatories to them 'mynstered by the saide courte for further inquisicion of the Kyng's tittle in the p'mysse, and vppon c'tificate, publycaçon, and heryng therof, hit dothe appere that the saide two Stypendarie Preestes have ben kepte there from tyme to tyme of devocyon w'owte any foundaçon bycause the Cure ys very greate: And that ther was no foundaçon therof, nor lands, ten'ts, nor rents, nor other yerelie p'fitts geven, lymytted or appoynted by any assurance for the maynt'ence of the same: Wherfor, forasmuch as it doth appere by the saide c'tificate and p'sentment that the saide two Stypendarie Preestes have no foundaçon nor p'petuitie; and also by a sp'iall p'vision in the saide statute of dissoluçon of Colleges, Free Chapels, and Chauntries, the lands, ten'ts, rents, and heredytaments of the gen'all corp'cons of Cities, Borowghes, and Townes Corporate be clerelye discharged and exempted out of the graunte to the Kynges Highness, his heires and successours, in the saide acte: It is ordered decreed of the saide Courte of Augmentaçons and revenues of the Kyng's Crowne, in the t'me of Saynt Mickell, that ys to say, the xii daye of November, in the thyrde yere of the reigne of our Sou'aighe Lord Kyng Edward the Sixte, that the saide Master and Co'ialtie of Wells, and their successours, shalbe clerelie exon'rted and discharged agenste the Kyng's Highness, his heyres and successours, of the saide sommes of fyve pounds, thirteene shillings and four pence yerelie, for the saide sev'all stypends, or salaries, of the saide two Stypendarie Preests, and of ev'y p't and p'cell therof: And that this decree shalbe a sufficyent discharge vnto the saide Master and Co'ialtie, and to ther successours, agenste the Kyng, his heires and successours, and also shalbe a sufficient warraunte vnto the Kyng's gen'all receyvors, Surveyors, Auditors, and all other his officers and mynisters of the saide Corte, for the allowance, and discharge of the same vnto such tyme as other good and sufficient matter be found to intitle the King's Highness to the same. Nos autem, &c. Teste Ric'o Sakevylle, Mil,' apud Westm. quarto decimo die Novembris, anno Regni n'ri tertio."

Edward VI. died July 6th, 1553, and was succeeded by his sister, Mary. The principles of the Reformation had steadily advanced during Edward's reign, but Queen Mary, as a professed Roman Catholic, soon proved her earnest desire for a revival of her own form of worship, and to undo much of that which had been done by her brother, and her father Henry VIII. For a short time the payment of the stipends had ceased, but ultimately became partially restored, as will be seen by a charter of the Queen, dated 17th May, in the first year of her reign (1554), whereby she granted in perpetuity an annuity, or pension of £7 6s. 8d., and

made it a legal and permanent charge on the possessions of the Corporation. A (translated) abstract of the original charter (which still remains with the city records) is here given :

"Mary by the grace of God, &c. At the humble petition of the burgesses and inhabitants of Wells, the Queen granted to Maurice Lluellin, Master (Mayor) of the City and Borough of Wells and the Burgesses of the same, an annual rent or annuity, or annual pension of £7 6s. 8d. out of the lands and tenements of the said Master and Burgesses; which rent, annuity, or pension was formerly given to the perpetual support of a Presbyter and anniversary in the parish church of Saint Cuthberte in Wells; also an annuity, or yearly pension of 16d. out of a tenement of the vicar of the same church, in Chamberlain Street: which rent was formerly given for the support of an anniversary in the said church. To have, enjoy, and receive the said annuities, &c., without account, so that the Master and Burgesses, and their successors should out of the issues therof, find a fit "Presbyter" to celebrate divine service in the parish church there, in aid of the vicar for the time being."

In the city records the sum paid for this charter, can be seen.

"The charge of the Quene's P'tent for the an'tie of £7 vjs. viiij., at whiche tyme Thomas Lewes and Mr. John Mawdeley beyng Burges' of the P'liament.

Impr's. For the signett of the Prive Seale—£iii xiijs. iiijd.

It'm. The fee in the Hannp'r—£viiij ixs. Od.

It'm. The Petye fees—£x. Os. Od.

It'm. The Counsaillie and drawing the Boke—vjs. viiijd.

It'm. The wrytynge and Secretary, and enrolleyng—£x vis. viiijd.

It'm. The Wax, Sealyng, and Grene Lace—iijs. iiijd—s'm £xvij. xs. xd.

This Bylle is paided and discharged.

It'm. Receyved more—£iiij. vis. viiijd.

Roger Walrond."

This charter, or grant, was no doubt intended as a step towards a revival of the old state of things which had existed here before the Reformation, and was only one of many other means used by the Queen and her partizans to induce her subjects to conform to her own views in matters of religion. These influences were severely felt in Wells, where the tenets of the Reformation had been widely and permanently acknowledged. The proceedings of the Queen and her followers were met by determined resistance on the part of many of the more influential inhabitants, one instance of which is noticed at some length in the city records. As a proof and example of the state of things at the time now under notice, this record is here given, in the belief that it will not be uninteresting to residents in Wells at this time.

"M'd that on Sat'day the xxvi day of August in the firste yere of the reigne of Mary the Queene's Ma'tie, was her gr'cious P'clamacon here p'claymed consernyng cristian religion; whiche day Masse was solemnly song in the p'ish church of Seynt Cuthb't accordyng to the old vse."

This change was energetically opposed at the very first of the restored services in the church. The opposition was viewed in so serious a light that witnesses were examined, and a special



report made to the Queen, and Thomas Lygh, the offender, (a person of considerable influence in the city), was committed to gaol. The report made to the Queen was as follows:—

“A C'tificate for Thomas Lygh. To the Quene, o'r Sou'aigne Lady.”

“Please it y'r excellent Highnesse of o'r most noble and hebandant grace to be certified that where we yo'r poure and humble subjects the M'r and burgeis's of yo'r gr'ces Cite of Wells, in the Countie of Som't, and other the inhabytants as well of the saide Cite as also of the countie there next adjoynnyng, the xxvi day of August last past, beyng peasably and quyetly assembled in a devowt man'r . . .

. . . Almighty God in the p'sh church of Seynt Cuthb't in Wells beforeseide, one Thomas Lygh, S'vant vnto Will'm Turn'r, comyng then into the seide church at the tyme of the second lesson in matens, immediately aft' and as sone as the same lesson was ended, the seide Thomas p'ceyv'ng an awlter in the q'uere there newly set forth that same day w't a picture of Crist crucified, and two candlesticks w't tapers upon the same, goyng aboute . . . to stire the people to sedition and disquietness, w't a lowd voyce and wyful countenance seyde theys repetyng thes words, “What the Devil have we here, wyll ye have the people comyt ydolatry ageyn,” at which words all the people there beyng sodenly moved and stirred into a grett vprore, Thomas Lewes, M'r of the city aboveseide, p'ceyvng the same and feryng a more mischeff that might then have folowed, quyetly p'cedyng hyselfe towards the seide Thomas Lygh, and cherytably exorted hym to hold his peace and to leve his talks in suehe matters, wh'uppon he answered in lyke wyful man'r as above is seide, ‘take recorde of it, for y wyll byde by it;’ Wheruppon the seide Thomas Lewes, p'ceyvng the outrageous behav'or of the seide Thomas Lygh vpon his seide exhortaçon not to seese, stretly comandyng in the name of yo'r highnes that all the people then and there gathered together shuld kepe themselves in peace and quyetnes, and that the p'ste and clerks there shuld goo forward in God's s'vyce, dyd ap'hend the seide Thomas Lygh, and accordyng vnto your g'ace's charge and commandment fer that behalf, beryng date at Richmond the xvij day of August last past, have com'ytted the seide Thomas Lygh vnto yo'r g'ce's gaole, there to remayn wythout bayle or maynp'se duryng the pl'sor of yo'r higness, whose royall estate by the godnes of God p'sved we yo'r g'ce's poure and humble subjectts the M'r and burgesses beforeseide do dayly p'y for the long contynuece therof w't moche encrease of honor. . . Dated at Wells beforeseide vnder o'r Com'on seale. Given the xxx day of August, the first yere of y'r most gracious reigne.”

The gaol to which the offender was committed was not the County Gaol, but the prison or gaol of the Bishop's Bailiwick, in Wells, (now the office of the Secretary to the Lord Bishop). This did not meet the approval of the Queen's advisers, as will appear from the following letter:—

“Lr Jacobi Fitz James.”

“Beloved, I have receyved yo'r L're and do p'ceyve thereby that one Lygh was lyke on Sat'y last to make some sterr, or vpror, in the Cite of Wells, and that he is apprehended and not sent to the gayle: I assure yow yt not well done, as I thinke he shuld so long remayne from thens, wherfyr my advyse shalbe 'at he be sent immediatly vnto the Gayle, and y shall advise the Quene therof wt as moche spede as may be, not only for the spekyng of the bloddy words, but it is to be doughted whether he be sett on by any other evill p'sons or no, consyderyng whose man he is, and how stoughtly he stode in the evill fact; agen consyderyng how fyccle the towne of Wells doth stande, and the cuntrye abowte the same, Mr. Maudley is lerned and I do not a lytel marvell what he meneth that he do not se hym ponyshed accordyng to the Quene's p'clamaçon; yf he wyll not ye shall have my help therin vntill the Quene's pleasure be known. Vale in Criste Ih'u.

Jacobus Fitz James.”

The result of these proceedings is not recorded, but I believe no very serious consequences followed, as Thomas Legh, the offender, was elected Mayor of the city in 1565, 1566, 1570, 1581, 1589, soon after which he died, and was buried in the south transept of St. Cuthbert's Church. After the death of Mary and on the accession of her sister, Queen Elizabeth, the payments to the Chantry Priests again ceased for several years. At length by long continued efforts, the Corporation obtained two new Charters, which defined and considerably extended the privileges of the citizens. In one of these Charters (A.D. 1581) the old pensions already adverted to were revived and perpetuated, and the Charter of Queen Mary confirmed, as will be seen by the following extract (translated from the original Latin); and it is under this Charter the payment has been since, and is at this time made :

"Whereas our Most dear Sister Mary late Queen of England, by her letters patent made under her Greate Seal of England, bearing date the seventeenth day of May, in the first year of her reign, Did give, grant, remise and release to her well-beloved subjects, Maurice Llewellyn, then Master of the City or Borough of Wells, in the county of Somerset, and to the burgesses of the same City or Borough, All that yearly rent, or annuity, or yearly pension of seven pounds, six shillings, and eightpence, of lawful money of England, issuing, and to issue out of the messuages, lands, and tenements of the said master and burgesses, in the City or Borough of Wells aforesaid; and which rent or annuity, or yearly pension, was formerly given, granted, or assigned, to the perpetual sustentation of a priest and anniversary in the parish church of St. Cuthbert, in the City or Borough of Wells : And also all that rent or annuity, or yearly pension of sixteen pence, issuing, and to issue out of one tenement of the vicars of the parish church aforesaid, in Wells aforesaid, situate in a certain street within the borough aforesaid, called Chamberlain Street; and which rent was formerly given or granted and assigned to the sustentation of the anniversary in the parish church aforesaid : To have, enjoy, receive, and retain the said yearly rent, or annuity, or yearly pension of seven pounds six shillings, and eightpence, and the said rent, or yearly pension of sixteen pence, to the aforesaid Maurice Llewellyn, Master of the City or Borough aforesaid, and the Burgesses of the same City or Borough, and their successors for ever, freely and quietly without any service or tenure of our said Sister, her heirs and successors, and without any accompt, or other thing for the same to our Sister her heirs and successors, to be yielded, paid and done, as by the same letters patent is more fully manifest and appears. [Then follows a recital of the Letters Patent granting a pension of £4 13s. 4d. to the Corporation of Wells in trust for the inmates of the Old Almshouse) "Know ye that we . . . of our special grace, and certain knowledge and mere motion, for us, our heirs, and successors, have granted and confirmed, and by these presents do grant and confirm to the aforesaid Mayor, Masters, and Burgesses of the City or Borough of Wells aforesaid, and their successors, All the aforesaid annuity, or yearly rents and pensions of seven pounds, six shillings, and eightpence; and the aforesaid rent, or yearly pension of sixteen pence, to the aforesaid Maurice Llewellyn, Master of the City or Borough aforesaid, and to the Burgesses of the same, by the aforesaid letters patent, of our most dear Sister Mary mentioned to be granted . . . To have, hold and receive the aforesaid yearly rent, or yearly pension of seven pounds six shillings and eightpence; and the aforesaid yearly pension of sixteen pence, to the aforesaid Mayor, Masters, and Burgesses of the City or Borough aforesaid, and their successors for ever without

without any other account, or any other thing for the same to us, our heirs and successors in anywise howsoever yielded, paid or done: Nevertheless we will and ordain that the aforesaid Mayor, Masters, and Burgesses of the City or Borough aforesaid, and their successors for ever hereafter, shall find or cause to be found out of the issues of the aforesaid annuities, or yearly rents of seven pounds, six shillings and eightpence, and sixteen pence, a fit Priest celebrating, and to celebrate divine things in the parish church of St. Cuthbert aforesaid, in Wells aforesaid, in aid of the vicars there for the time being."

The Corporation, from the first grant of the pensions, exercised the uncontrolled and exclusive right of appointing the assistant priest. This clearly appears from the corporate records. The following is one of such appointments, made 11th August, 1576:

"Hit is agreed and condiscended that Walter Celye, clerke, shall have the annuities and pençon of £vii by the yere, the whiche Sir John Turnor hadd; and that he shall have the same accordinge to the advice of the Counsell of the towne, and accordynge to the Quene's Mat's gr'nte."

Then follows the appointment:—

"To all trewe x'tien people to whome this p'sent writynge shall come. Will'm Smythe, Drap'r, M'r of the Buroughe of Welles in the Countie of Som't, and the Co'iltie of the same borough, sende gretynge in o'r Lorde God ev'lastinge. Knowe ye, We the sayd M. and Co'ialtie (the Corporation) have geven and granted, and by this p'sent writynge doe gyve and graunte vnto Walter Celye, clerke, one annutie, or yerelie pençon of seven pounds, of good and lawfull money of England, geven owte of o'r co'iltie rents and lands in Welles aforesayd: To have, hold, p'ceyve and take the annuities, or yerelie pençon of seven pounds, vnto the sayd Walter Celye, for and duryng his naturell life: To the entent, and vppon condiçon that the sayd Walter Celye shall from hensforthe serve and attende the divine s'vice in the p'ishe church of Saynte Cuthberte, in Welles aforesayd, and to syngge, serve, and mynystre in the same churche, and to ayde and help the Vyokar, and other mynysters in the sayd churche, in the tyme of devyne s'vice, at the com'andment of the M'r (Mayor) for the tyme beyng: And the same annuities, or yerelye pençon to be payd yerelie at fowre usuall terms, or feastes, of the yere, by even porçons, that is to saye, at the feaste of the birthe of o'r Lorde God; annunciaçon of o'r Ladie; the Natyvytie of Saynt John Baptist; and Saynt Mickell the Archangell; And yf hit shall happen the sayd annuitye, or yerelie pençon of seven pounds shall be behynd and onpayd in p'te, or in all, after any daye of payment in the whiche hit ought to be payd, by the space of one moneth, yf hit be lawfully asked, that then hit shalbe lawful vnto the saide Walter Celye, and his assignes, to enter in and vppon, o'r com'on lands and rents in Welles aforesayd, and to distrayne, and the distresses then soe taken to kepe and detayne vntyll the sayd annuitye, or yerelie pençon soe beinge behynde and vnpayd, be vnto the said Walter, or his assignes, fullie contentyd and payd, together with the arrearages therof, yf any suche be. And furthermore knowe ye that vs the said M'r and Co'ialtie have put the sayd Walter Celye in full and peaceable possession and seizin of the sayd annuitye or yerelie pençon by the payment and delyv're of one pen'y of good and lawfull money of England in name of seizin of the same. In witness wherof, we the sayd M'r and Co'ialtie of the Borough aforesayd to theis p'sents have sett our com'on seale. Geven the last daye of Septembre, in the nyneteenth yere of the reigne of o'r Sov'aigne Ladie, Elizabeth, by the Grace of God, Quene of England, Fraunce and Irelande, Defender of the Faith, &c."

On the 17th July, 1612, another appointment is recorded, which, translated from the Latin, is to the following effect:—

"On the same day, all they whose names are above inscribed (the Corporation) on the occasion of the death of Thomas Merest, late Presbyter in the church of St. Cuthbert, in Wells; Thomas Dugdale, Clerk, is elected to that office; to receive yearly seven pounds, so long as he be willing to perform all such laudable services as the above-mentioned Thomas Merest, and others preceding him have performed."

In 1620, the Corporation, on the complaint of the then vicar, suspended the payment of the pensions, as appears by the following order:—

"It is ordered and condiscoined by all the p'sons heere p'sent (the Corporation) that insomuch as Mr. Hall, the vicar of St. Cuthbert's, dothe affirme that Mr. Deane, the nowe Chaplain, w'ch receaveth the £vii for to assist the said vicar, as his chaplaine and curat, and soe neglecteth the cure of the church many tymes, w'ch, if it were not for the said Mr. Hall, the s'vyce might be left whoely vndoen. It is therefore ordered that the stipend w'ch hath been paid to the said chaplaine shalbe respited vntill suche tyme as there shalbe further consideraçon."

It will be observed that the pension noticed in these proceedings is said to be £7 only. Why it became so reduced I cannot explain.

During the troubles incident to the rebellion in the reign of Charles I., a vacancy occurred in the office of "Stipendary Priest," which the Corporation not only filled up, but appointed the same person as governor of the Old Almhouse. This will be seen by the following extract from the corporate records:—

"The election of Mr. Francis Standish to be Chaplaine in St. Cuthbert, and to have ye stipend.

"Whereas Mr. Daniel Buckley, clerke, late governor of the hospitall, founded by Bishop Bubwith, and Stypendarie in ayd of the Vicar of St. Cuthbert, in Wells; and lykewyse stypendarie for saying morning prayer in the said parish church of St. Cuthbert, deceased vpon thursday last, being the 23rd day of this instant March; by means whereof the said places are now voyd, and one other incumbent is to be chosen for the supplying of the said service: and for that the Deane and Chapter of the Cathedral Church of Wells, have formerly nominated a governor for the said hospitall, or almshouse, who are not now resident in Wells, but are, and have been elsewhere inhabitynge for certain causes best known to themselves, but chiefly by reason of the dangerousness of the tymes: Therefore the persons above-named (the Corporation), for the present service, have appointed Mr. Francis Standish, clarke, one of the vicars chorall of the Cathedrall Church afore-said, to supply the place of governor in the sayd hospitall, vntill the said Deane and Chapter shall otherwise dispose of it; and to supply the place in ayd of the Vicar of the said parish church of St. Cuthbert, and to say Morning Prayer in the said Church every day, vntill such tyme as itt shall otherwyse be ordered; and the persons above-named have elected the said Mr. Francis Standish to receave the said annuytie for the present service, due from the Corporation, whiche is about £vii by the yeare, and lykewyse to receave the said stipend for the saying of Morning Prayer, which is £iii, dew from the said parish of St. Cuthbert."

The appointment of Mr. Standish, as Governor and Chaplain of the Almhouse, as well as the assistant Priest to the Vicar of St. Cuthbert, was not unusual, as the two offices were often held by the same person, who was generally styled as the "Mayor's Chaplain." The following extract from the Register of Burials of St. Cuthbert's church under date 1612, will afford evidence of the fact: "Mr Thomas Mere, *Chaplain to the Mayor*, and Governor of the Almshouse, departed this life the 14th of May,

and was buried the 17th." The Thomas Mere here mentioned, is, no doubt, the Thomas Merest who was succeeded by Thomas Dugdale as before noticed.

It has already been proved that the right of appointing the assistant priest, or curate, was, originally, legally vested in, and exercised by the Corporation of Wells, and it is equally certain that the stipend or pension of £7 6s. 8d. was, until a recent period, generally paid by the corporate body, to their own nominee. The following extracts from the accounts of the "General Receiver" of the Corporation, are given in support of this statement:

1659.—Paid Mr. Standish, by order—£7 0s. 0d.

1688.—Item. Paid Mr. Francis Standish, Governor of the Almshouse, for readings prayer—£7 0s. 0d.

1670.—Paid Mr. Standish and Mr. Davidge, for reading mornynge prayer—£7 0s. 0d.

1684.—Paid Mr. Collins, the Curate, for 3 quart's Salary—£5 5s. 0d.

It. Paid Mr. Collins for one quarter's salary—£1 15s. 0d.

1685.—Paid Mr. Collins ye Curate his halfe yr's salary, endinge the 25th March—£3 10s. 0d.

1693.—Paid Mr. Shallett for 3 sermons—£1 3s. 4d.

Pd him for a years's salary reading prayers at St. Cuthbert's—£7 0s. 0d.

1703.—To Mr. Bellinger for readings of prayer, halfe a years ending Lady-day, 1703—£3 10s. 0d.

1736.—Pd Mr. Archdeacon Hudolstone 1 years's salary—£3 8s. 4d.

This latter payment no doubt included £1 3s. 4d. for commemoration sermons, which will be noticed elsewhere.

The subject of the payment of the pension was frequently discussed by the Corporation, and objections made to the practice which had arisen of paying it to the Vicar, instead of the Curate. At length during the Mayoralty of the late Joseph Lovell Lovell, Esq., in 1836, the following order was made and recorded on the corporate proceedings.

"The Vicar of St. Cuthbert having claimed of the council two pensions, or yearly rents of £7 6s. 8d. and 16d., amounting together to £7 8s. 0d.: the former issuing out of the corporate estates, and the latter out of the Vicar's possessions, and it appearing to us that he is not entitled thereto, but that under the Charter of 31st Elizabeth, and under the provisions of the Act of 5th and 6th William IV. Chap. 76, sec. 72, such pensions are confided to us the Council, in trust to find a fit Presbyter, celebrating and to celebrate divinity in the parochial church of St. Cuthbert, to the aid of the Vicar thereof, for the time being: We therefore now rule and ordain that such pensions are not payable to the Vicar; and we request the Mayor to make this resolution known to the Vicar, the Rev. Henry Watson Barnard, and at the same time to request payment of the pension of 16d., payable by him to the Council as Trustees, as aforesaid."

On the 15th May, 1837, the council discussed the subject again, and then made the following order:

"The Council rule and ordain that the pension, of which they are trustees, as stated in page 192 of this book, be paid to the Rev. Mr. Sidebottom, the priest celebrating divinity in the parish church of St. Cuthbert, in aid of the Vicar."

These orders, which have never been revoked, were followed during a considerable period, but for several years the pension was paid to the Vicar instead of the Presbyter, or Curate. The old practice of payment to the curate has again been lately revived. The lesser pension of 16d., probably from its insignificance, has not been paid for many years. A notice of the non-payment occurs in the Receiver's account, in 1767, where it is said to be in arrear since the year 1699.

The subject of this old pension has recently been discussed by the Corporation, and in March 1870 the Town Clerk was instructed to search the corporate records and report on the pension to the Mayor's Chaplain, as well as on the Gift, or Commemoration sermons. This report was made; and on the 4th April, 1870, the following resolution was agreed to:—

"Resolved that having regard to the Charters of Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth, and the orders of the Council made and recorded on the minutes of the Council, on the 30th December, 1836, and the 15th May, 1837, the pension of £7 6s. 8d., and money for gift sermons be voted annually by the Council on the 9th of November, and that the treasurer be instructed not to pay the money until he receives the order of the council."

Thus the matters with reference to the old pension of £7 6s. 8d., and the Commemoration Sermons remain at this time.





## The Corporation Pew.

**T**HE seats now used by the Corporation undoubtedly belong to that body by prescriptive right, acquired by immemorial possession. The unusual authority exercised by the corporation in the affairs of the Church of St. Cuthbert, before spoken of, gave them, from a very early date, the right to the exclusive use of certain seats when they attended divine service, which they were accustomed to do in past times very much more frequently than now. Even in the general disposition of the seats, other than their own, the corporate body seem to have had extraordinary powers, as the following extract from their proceedings, 19th December, 1511, will prove :—

“ At this Convocaçon the Maister (Mayor) and his brothers, with the assent and consent of all the burgesses, heth fully condyscended and agreed that from hensforthe, for the comyn wealthe, profite and avayle of ye churche of Seyncte Cuthberte, no p'son shall occupie and vse in the seide churche no mo' setes, or pewes, but for one p'son ; the residewe shalbe yielded vppe into the wardeynes' handes, and theie, by the consente of the Maister, to sell them to suche honest p'sons that hath noe setes, to the moste a'vantage of the saide churche ; and in lykewyse the xxiv burgeis' (the corporation) shal from hensforthe occupie and sit in the sete and pewe of olde tyme ordeyned for them, and yeld vppe such setes as thei have in the churche beside, to the a'vantage of the saide churche : And then it was com'anded that John Cole (one of the xxiv) shuld not vse to sit in his wyffis sete, but vse the sete of the xxiv, vppon payne of a nobull, to be payed and employed to ye churche's workes.”

Not only were there seats or pews specially appropriated to the corporation, but also to the wife of each eight married “ Masters ” of the municipal body.

On the 3rd November, 1567, the corporation asserted a right, in dealing with the pews, superior to the churchwardens and vicar by making an order "That for bycause Joh'n Kyngge, late churchwarden of this p'yshe, did place the wyfe of Richarde Shep'de, Clerke, Vicar there, in a pew apoynted specially for one of the sayde m'res wyves, w'owte the advice or consent of the sayde M'r and his brethrene, contrary to an olde auncient order and pleaus'nce therof vsed tyme owte of mynde, he is am'ced for his offence, vi s. viij."

The seats now used by the corporation are partly made up from materials not originally designed for such a purpose. These materials are of oak, in some parts elaborately and elegantly carved. There is an old tradition that this ancient sculptured oak once formed part of a screen in Glastonbury Abbey, or in some building connected with that once magnificent establishment. Traditions of this kind are rarely without *some* foundation, and portions of the exterior of the seats present indications which will go far to support the old traditional account referred to, particularly a beautifully-sculptured cypher in one of the bench ends representing the letters R. B., being the initials of Richard Bere, who became Abbot of Glastonbury in 1494, and died in 1524, when he was succeeded by the Venerable Richard Whitynge, who, in 1539, was cruelly put to death by order of the Commissioners of Henry VIII. The cypher is precisely similar in design to many others still to be seen in churches and buildings known to have been erected or repaired by Abbot Bere. There are other reasons in support of the evidence of the truth of the old tradition now being noticed. In an account of the receipts and payments by the corporation, under date 18th January, 1568, the following entries occur:—

(Receipt). "The sayde accomptante is charged with £33 6s. 8d., w'ch he rec'd of Leonard of Shepton, for the House at Glastonbury—£xxx. vjs. viijd.

(Payments). "The sayd accompt't prayeth allowance of £xij payde Mr. Payne in earnest for the House at Glastonbury—£xij.

It'm of £xl. payde Mr. Payne for the same House—£xl.

"It'm. Payde for my charges at Glaston, twise, to speke wyth Payne w'n the aforesaide house was a takynge downe—xijs."

This plainly proves that the corporation purchased and pulled down buildings at Glastonbury, and there cannot be much doubt that the "House," was part of, or in some way connected with the Abbey, as it is a well known fact that large quantities of



materials were sold some years after the dissolution. Moreover, it is not probable that the "House" so pulled down was an ordinary dwelling-house.

In the account immediately preceding that from which the foregoing extracts have been given, there is another item which also proves that the seats of the corporation were either set up, or altered about that time:—

"It'm. Payde Brynstone for the M<sup>res</sup> (Master's or Mayor's) pew in the church wyth hangynges and lace,—xvi s vi d."

The seats, made at that time, after the lapse of a few years, appear to have been found inconvenient, and requiring alteration. This will be seen from the following extract from the proceedings of the corporation, under date 19th June, 1625 :—

"Vppon complaynt made of the grevaunces in the new seates, w<sup>ch</sup> many of this House doe conceave to be in the erectinge of the same seates, w<sup>ch</sup> now be in the p<sup>is</sup>he church of St. Cuthb<sup>te</sup>, for the Mayor, Recorder, and the Mayor, his brethrene, the Town Clerke, and the sixteene capitall burgesses : It is desired that the same seates may be reformed vnto the auntient forme as they were, and that the tymber w<sup>ch</sup> is left may be kepte for that purpose : Whervppon for that all the xxiiij ar not here p<sup>s</sup>ent, it is condiscinded that such of the xxiiij ar not here p<sup>s</sup>ent, it is condiscinded that such of the xxiiij as can shew any cause ag<sup>t</sup> this order shal appeare here at the next Convocaçon, and in the meantyme it is consented vnto by the names followinge—viz., Richard Casbeard, Tho. Jeanes, Will'm Towse, John Crees, Will'm Jett, Will'm Taverner, Will'm Atwell, Ro. Broadbeare, Henry Foster, Mr. Ro. Lane, Mr. Henry Baron, Mr. Tho. Baron, Mr. Barth'ew Cox, Maior, except Mr. Vertue Hunt. Two of the absent corporators, Walter Bricke, (the founder of Bricke's Almahouse), and John Cox, subsequently consented to the alterations."

In further illustration of the authority of the corporation in dealing with the pews in the church, the following extract from the city records, A.D. 1507, is given:—

"At this assemble it is ordeyned that from hensfurthe oon of the constables for the tyme of his office, shall have his sete in the church wyth John Standerwyke."

"And that [the] other constable for the tyme of his office, shall have his sete ther as the Town Clerke now occupyeth, that is to wyte, in the place wher John Derynge now sitteth; this to be firme and stable."

"And moreover it is ordeyned that when the Mayster the Saturdayes, and other Fests dep'tyth w'th the Priests byfore the crosse in the body of the church, that as many of the xxiiij as be theynne in the church shall accompanye w'th the Mayster, vpon payne of a gallon of wine."

The royal arms until recently affixed to the corporation pew, were put there at the restoration, when the inhabitants, many of whom had been great sufferers during the rebellion, gave vent to the most unbounded expressions of joy, and in their zealous loyalty set up these arms as a memorial of the event, and inscribed them thus :—"This armes set vp when King Charles the Second was proclaimed, in the xii year of his reign, 1660."

The powers exercised by the corporate body in matters connected with the church of St. Cuthbert, were doubtless far greater before the Reformation than afterwards. These powers gradually became more limited, but were by no means extinguished. As late as 1706, the following order was made :—

“ Whereas sev’ all strangers (on the Lord’s day, com’only called Sunday), intrude themselves into the corporaçon seate, or pew, belonging to the eight Masters’ wives of the said citty, insomuch that often times there is not sufficient roome for the members of this house, and the saide eight masters’ wives to sitt in their respective seates or pews : This house dothe therefore order and agree (to prevent such lyke inconvenyences for the future), that the receiver doe forthwythe cause fower lockes to be sett on the saide Corporaçon seates, being one on ev’ y doore, and one key to open the same, w’ch the belman is to kepe, and open the s’d doores for the Corporaçon when hee shall see them come into the s’d p’ishe church ; and alsoe to putt one locke on the s’d pewe, belonging to the s’d eight Masters’ wives seate, and geve one key to the saide bellman to open the same for the s’d eight Masters’ wives for the tyme being, as they or either of them shall have occasion.”

The old custom of attending divine service at the parish church seems to have partially fallen into disuse in the early part of the last century. To remedy this a new bye-law, or ordinance, was made on the 12th November, 1709, that on every Sunday when the Mayor attended the service, all the members of the Corporation, with the Recorder and Town Clerk, who then went to the church, were to wait on the Mayor “in their respective robes or gownes,” and for each default a fine of 1s. was to be paid. If the Mayor omitted to give directions to the Sergeants at Mace, so that the members of the Corporation, with the Recorder and Town Clerk, might have timely notice, the Mayor himself was to be subject to a fine of 5s. For any neglect of duty in giving proper notice to every corporator, the Sergeants at Mace were to lose their places. At that time, the City Trading Companies, with their banners, and often with a band, attended service at the church, and this practice continued down to a period within the memory of persons now living.

At a meeting of the Corporation on the 20th November, 1711, after making an order that at all future meetings of the Corporation the Mayor should have power to “send for any liquors and other necessaries for the entertainment and refreshment of the said Corporation during the time of business of such meetings,” not exceeding 6s. 8d ; a second ordinance was made to the following effect :—

“ At the same time it was ordered and agreed unto by this House, that the Receiver belonging to this corporation shall with all convenient speed, buy and provide thirteen large handsome Com’on Prayer Books, of the newest or latest edition, to be fixed with chains to the seat or pews belonging to this corporation,

in the parish church of St. Cuthbert, in Wells, for the use of the said corporation, and their successors, in manner following, viz. :—five of the said books to be fixed in the pew or seat of the Mayor and Masters, and four more thereof in each pew belonging to ye sixteen, or common councill: the said Receiver to buy the s'd books, and defray ye expence of fixing ye same out of the public stock belonging to this corporation."

In the recent re-arrangement of the seats in the church, permission was given to the churchwardens by the corporation for changing the position of the ancient corporate pew, so that the seats instead of being from east to west, might be made to range transversely from north to south, across the church. This being ultimately assented to, the change was duly recorded in the proceedings of the corporate body; the exchanged seats being to remain for the perpetual use of the corporation for the time being in substitution for those given up. These new seats have small brass plates inserted in them certifying that they belong to the "Corporation of Wells." The carved wood which partly made up the old pews, was again brought into use, with the addition of other wood, carved in a similar design, on which are added the arms of the city as represented on the silver seal now officially used by the Mayor, "Per fess ar. and vert, a tree proper issuant from the fess line, in base three wells, two and one, masoned gu."

The larger portion of the pews in the church were, for a long period, made the subject of bargains, by sale for money considerations paid to the churchwardens, or to persons to whom such grants had been made, on sales by them to other persons. These bargains were generally for certain lives named at the time of making the grants. The following are examples of the records of such transactions, made in a book kept for the purpose :—

"3."

"1683."—William Coward, Esq're, Recorder, his executors and assigns this whole pew for the severall lives of Mr. William Coward, and Mrs. Catharine Coward, son and daughter of ye said William Coward, Esq."

"1706.—Mr. William Goldfinch, and Mary his wife, hath this whole pew for terme of their lives,—sold to them vpon the surrender of William Coward, Esq., son and executor of ye said William Coward above-named, late Serjeant-at-Law, deceased."

"1716.—Mrs. Elizabeth, wife of Mr. William Goldfinch, a seat in this pew for term of her life in ye room of Mary, his late wife."

"13."

"1660.—Thomas White, Esq., this whole pew for terme of his wife's life." "(This Thomas White was made Recorder of Wells, by order of Oliver Cromwell, but was expelled from that office at the restoration of Charles II.)"

"1709.—Sold Mrs. Jane White a seat in this pew for the life in room of her mother."

"33."

"1734, 28th August.—Then sold to Peter Davis, Esq., Recorder, to be held and enjoyed by him, his executors and assigns for the lives of Robert Davis, Esq., Mr. Peter Davis, Richard Comes, junr., Esq., and Mr. Dodington Sherston, four seats in the South Isle (viz.): No. 81, No. 82, No. 83, No. 84, for two pounds and four shillings. At the same the churchwardens, on behalf of the parish, agreed to renew a life for the time to come for eleven shillings.

Witness my hand, Wm. Higgins."

"89."

"1701.—Mr. John Robinson this whole pew for his owne life, and the lives of Charles Tudway, his grandchild, and Mary Tudway, his daughter."

"1."

"12th August, 1749.—Then sold to the Hon'ble George Hamilton, Esq., to be held and enjoyed by him, his executors, and assigns, for ye lives of himself and Bridget, his wife, John Hamilton, and Bridget Hamilton, his son and daughter, four seats in ye pew, late Richard Bakehouse's, for seventeen shillings. At ye same time the churchwardens on ye behalf of ye pariah, agreed to renew a life for the time to come for four shillings."

This practice continued until a comparatively recent date, but it is now wholly at an end, and any attempt at a revival of the old custom would, as the law now stands, be illegal.





## Gifts to the Church of St. Cuthbert.

**D**ONATIONS to the church were in early times much more frequent than at present. This was especially so before the Reformation. Few persons would venture to make their wills without including donations to the church, and often to the ministers and officers connected with it. These gifts were generally in money, but sometimes in provisions, live stock, or goods, such as wheat, oxen, sheep, &c.

I have selected from the public records a few examples of gifts to the church of St. Cuthbert, as faithful illustrations of the habits and customs of the periods to which they refer.

Robert Southovere, of Wells, made his will on Thursday next after the Feast of the Decollation of St. John the Baptist [Aug. 29th], A.D. 1300, from which the following is a (translated) extract :—

“First, I leave my soul to God and the Blessed Mary, and all the Saints, and my body to be buried in the churchyard of the church of St. Cuthbert, at Wells. Also, I leave to the chaplain of the parish of the same church, threepence. Also, I leave to the two clerks of the same church, twopence.”

“Proved before Walter de Haselschawe, Dean of Wells, the eighth of the Ides of September [6th Sept.], 1300.”

In 1348, a testator by his will, leaves a legacy for the sustentation of a light in the church of St. Cuthbert; nineteen sheep to the fabric of the church; also a piece of lead to the cathedral; to the Hospital of St. John, one best bed; to his brother Philip one moiety of his arrows; and to his brother Thomas the other moiety. He also gives a silver seal in a pocket (or bag) of silk.

**GRANT AND CONFIRMATION OF A HOUSE IN GROPE LANE.  
(NOW UNION STREET) A.D. 1352.**

"Know all men to whom this present writing shall come, that I, Thomas Gyngelot, son and heir of Thomas Gyngelot, deceased, have given, granted, and by this present writing confirmed unto Thomas de Draycote and William Wynd, Wardens of the goods of the church of St. Cuthbert in Welles, one messuage with its appurtenances; which messuage is situate in the town of Welles, in a certain lane which is called Grope . . . lane, between the tenement of Adam de Carleton, on the south side, and the tenement which belonged to Matthew le Coke, when living, on the north side: To have and to hold the messuage aforesaid, with its appurtenances, unto the aforesaid Thomas and William, wardens as aforesaid, and their successors, wardens for the time being, freely, wholly, well, and in peace for ever; they rendering yearly thereout unto the church of St. Cuthbert, that is of the Blessed Mary there, five silver pennies, and two pennies to celebrate two masses in each year in the church aforesaid for the souls of my father and mother. And I, the aforesaid Thomas, and my heirs, will against all mortal men warrant, acquit, and keep harmless the aforesaid messuage, with its appurtenances, unto the aforesaid Thomas and William, wardens of the goods of the church aforesaid, and their successors, wardens, who for the time being shall be such wardens. In witness of which thing, to this writing I have set my seal. Given at Welles, on Monday the Feast of St. George [April 23rd] in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of King Edward after the Conquest the Third: These being witnesses hereto,—Walter de Comptone, Thomas le Saltere, William Faukes, John de Hamme, William Jurdan, Adam de Carleton, Richard de Harpetre, and others."

Then comes the confirmation by a separate deed:—

"To all and singular to whom these present letters shall come. Thomas Gyngelot, son and heir of Thomas Gyngelot, deceased, greeting in the Lord everlasting.—Know ye that I have remitted, released, and wholly for myself and my heirs for ever quit claimed, unto Thomas de Draycote and William Wynd, wardens of the goods of the church of St. Cuthbert in Welles, and to their successors who for the time being shall be wardens of the goods aforesaid, All my right and claim which I have, and in any manner may have, in one messuage with its appurtenances, situate in the town of Welles, in a certain lane which is called Grope . . . lane, between the tenement of Adam de Carleton, on the south side, and the tenement which belonged to Matthew le Coke, when living, on the north side: so that neither I, Thomas, my heirs, nor any other person in our name, shall for the future, by any means or device, be able to exact, demand, or have any right or claim in the messuage aforesaid, with its appurtenances; but shall be forever excluded from all action and remedy of law by these presents. In witness of which thing, to these presents I have set my seal. These being witnesses hereto, Walter de Comptone, Thomas le Saltere, William Faukes, John de Hamme, Adam de Carlton, Walter Jurdan, John Jurdan, Richard de Harpetre, clerke, and many others. Given at Welles on Wednesday the feast of St. Mark the Evangelist, [April 25th], in the twenty sixth year of the reign of King Edward, after the Conquest, the third" [A.D. 1352].

The following translation from an original grant, jointly to the Mayor of the city and the wardens of St. Cuthbert, is another instance of the connection, in early times, between the corporation and the parish church:—

"To all the faithful in Christ to whom this present writing shall come; Christina le Devenysshire Greeting in the Lord:—Know ye that I have in my pure widowhood and my full power remised, released, and for me and my heirs forever have quit claim to John called the Roper, Steward (Seneschal) of the Borough of Wells, Ad[am] de Schepton and William Kokeson, keepers of the goods of the Church of Saint Cuthbert, Wells, and all the Commonalty of the same Borough, all my right and claim which I have, or hereafter in any manner may have, in one tenement and five shops adjoining to the same, with all their appurtenances, in

L

Wells, in the county of Somerset; which tenement is situate in the street which is called Grope . . . lane, on the eastern side of the same street; and the said five shops are situate on the eastern side of the said street called Grope . . . lane, as far as the tenement which was late of Richard Goly during his life; So that neither I, the said Christina, nor my heirs, nor any other persons in our name, shall assert any manner of right or claim to the said tenement and five shops, with their appurtenances, in anywise, and that we are excluded from all action and remedy of right by this present writing forever; And I the aforesaid Christina and my heirs, all the said tenement, and all the said shops, with all the appurtenances, to the said John the Roper Ad. and William, and all the Commonalty of the said borough, and their successors, will warrant, acquit, and against all persons forever defend. In witness wherof to this present writing I have affixed my seal [in the presence of] these witnesses: John de Wyke, Lord of Milton; Thomas de Panes; Henry Tonere; Roger le Boteler; Hugh At Capell; William de Aston; John de Pokelchurch; Walter At Wyche; John At Stone; Walter de Somerton; William le Toukar, de Wokey Hole; and others: And forasmuch as my seal is unknown to many persons, I have procured the official seal of the Bishop of Bath and Wells to be affixed. Given at Wells the twenty-fourth day of the month of April, in the twenty-second year of the reign of King Edward the Third after the Conquest" [1347].

1362. Walter de Compton, Merchant, and Burgess of Wells, by his will desired to be buried in the church of St. Cuthbert, before the altar of S.S. Peter and Paul, and gave 20s. to be distributed among the poor, in cloth and shoes; to the Vicar £6 for forgotten tythes; £10 for annuals, for the good of his soul; a yearly rent of 6s. 8d. to Nicholas de Crestisham, warden of St. Cuthbert, and his successors, for ever, in trust for the fraternity of the Blessed Mary, and the Holy Trinity, to keep the anniversary of himself, and Margery his wife; and 5s. yearly out of a tenement in which he lived, in High Street, in Wells, to the wardens, or Proctor of St. Cuthbert, to hold every year one solemn anniversary for his soul, and the soul of his wife, on the day she should die. Besides these gifts, the will contains many others to his daughter, wife of Ralph Towker, and to another daughter, Maud, with a provision that if they died without children, the property so given to them should go to the two fraternities before named. The Testator also gave a rent of six marks out of a tavern and burgage in High street, opposite Jacob's well (lately the King's Arms Inn), between the shops of William Atte Wode and John Combaway, to his wife for her life, and then to the Dean and Chapter of the cathedral, forever, on condition that they provided a chaplain, who should be a vicar of the cathedral, to celebrate at the altar of St. Stephen, and using there the office regularly used in the choir, of collects accustomed for the dead, for the good of the souls of himself and his wife. Out of the six marks, 8d. yearly were to be paid to the sacrist for tolling the great bell, and for finding

books and lights for the chantry there. He also bequeathed 20s. for mending the Priory of St. John, in Wells. The will was proved before the official of the Dean, in the cathedral, on Sunday after the feast of St. Martin, 1362.

A.D. 1377. John Gy, by his will directs that if he returned from sea, his body was to be buried in the churchyard of St. Cuthbert's church, at Wells; 20s. on the day of his obit to be distributed among Christ's poor. To John Palmer he leaves a fur, and his sword. His tenement in Biestewalles [East Wells], which Walter Bale held for his life, to be sold, and the produce thereof to be divided among Christ's poor, and the priests who were to celebrate for benefit of his soul. Residue of his property to William Banastre and John Knyth, his executors, but if they failed in their duty, he gave such residue to his next of kin.

A.D. 1379. Christina, wife of Walter Halyet, of Wells, by her will (among other bequests) gave to John Spaldyng, then Vicar of St. Cuthbert, 5s.; and to Sir John Bullok, 8d. to pray for her soul; and to three clerks in the church, 2d. each. The will was proved before William de Walley, Rector of Portshedd, in the chapel of the blessed Mary, near the Close, 21st April, 1379.

#### WILL OF JOHN BROWN, A.D. 1407.

"In the name of God, Amen. I, John Brown, burgess of Wells, on Sunday next, before the Feast of St. Ambrose, namely, on the third day of the month of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand four hundred and seven, being of good memory, do make my testament in this manner: In the first place I leave my soul unto God my Creator, and my body to holy burial, to be buried in the church of St. Cuthbert at Wells, near to the tomb of Henry Bonedich, formerly burgess of Wells. Also I leave unto Sir Walter, vicar of the church of St. Cuthbert aforesaid, twenty shillings for tythes forgotten, and to every chaplain usually celebrating divine service in the said church twelve pence to celebrate for my soul, and to the three clerks of the same church sixpence. Also I leave to the building and repair of the Altar of the Holy Trinity in the same church, one hundred shillings. Also I leave unto every poor person who shall come on the day of my burial to seek alms of the faithful in Christ, one halfpenny loaf. And my will is that there shall be provided four torches, to be borne by four poor men, clad at my cost in new cloth, around my body on the day of my burial; and that at my obsequies five wax tapers shall be prepared and burn around my body at "Placebo" and "Dirige" and at Mass. Also, I leave to every paralytic person lying on his bed, and to other persons most in want, of the city of Wells, and of the parish, fourpence, to be paid at the discretion of my executors, up to the sum of thirty-three shillings and fourpence. Also, I leave to each of my god-children, male and female, men and women, twelve pence. Also, I leave to each order of Mendicant Friars in Bristol, six shillings and eightpence, and to the Friars Minors, of Bryggewatere, six shillings and eightpence, and to the Friars Preachers, of Iwelcestre, six shillings and eightpence. Also, I leave to finding two fit chaplains to celebrate in the parish church aforesaid for the souls of Henry Bonedich, Johanna his wife, and myself, and the souls of all the faithful deceased, ten pounds sterling. Also, I leave twenty shillings to be distributed to the chaplains who shall celebrate for my soul immediately after my



death, namely, to each chaplain one penny. Also, I leave to the road of la Portwaye, for the repair thereof, twenty shillings. Also, I do give and leave unto Alice my wife, all my messuage, with the shops unto the same messuage adjacent, situate in Welles, near the corner of the lane of la Muellelane, between a certain house which I hold of the prior and brethren of St. John the Baptist in Wells, in the said lane, on the south side, and the messuage which John Pope, tylere, holds of the master and commonalty of Wells, in the High street of the same town of Wells, on the east side:—To have and to hold the whole of the messuage aforesaid, with the shops and all the appurtenances, unto the aforesaid Alice, my wife, for the term of her life, of the chief lord of the fee, by the rents and services due and of right accustomed for the same. And after the decease of the said Alice, my wife, my will is that the whole of the messuage before mentioned, with the shops and their appurtenances, shall remain unto the master and commonalty of the borough of Wells for the time being,—To have, and to hold the messuage before-mentioned, with the shops and all their appurtenances, unto the aforesaid master and commonalty, and their successors for ever, of the chief lords of the fee, by the rents and services due, and of right accustomed for the same. Also I do give and leave unto the aforesaid Alice, my wife, all my estate which I have in two shops in Welles, situate in the High Street of the same town, between a certain shop of Isabella Tannere on the west side, and the messuage which Simon Bayley holds on the east side,—To have and to hold my said estate and shops unto the aforesaid Alice, and her assigns for a term of certain years, as to which in a certain deed made thereon it is more fully contained, which deed I had of the grant of Henry le Bouedyche, and Johanna his wife, by the rents and services due and of right accustomed for the same. Also I leave to John Blythe forty shillings. Also I leave to John Barbour, dyer, twenty shillings. Also I leave to William Lykyng, bochere, forty shillings. The residue of all my goods, not left, I do give and leave unto the aforesaid Alice, my wife, that she may do therewith and dispose of the same in such manner as to her shall seem best and most expedient. And well and trustily to carry out this testament, I do ordain, make, and appoint the aforesaid Alice, my wife, and John Barbour, my executors; and to the end that my will may in due manner be carried out, I do ordain the aforesaid John Blithe, supervisor thereof, by these presents. Given at Welles, the day and year of our Lord above mentioned.

“Proved before Thomas Bartone, clerk commissary general of the Reverend Father in Christ, and Lord, the Lord Henry, by the grace of God, Bishop of Bath and Welles,” “in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary, near the cathedral church of Welles,” on the eighth of April, A.D. 1407.

The Testator, John Brown, was Mayor of Wells in 1391, 1396, and Henry Bowedych, whose name occurs in the will, filled the same office in 1380, 1383. They were, I believe, both buried in the chapel of the Holy Trinity.

A.D. 1446. William Gascoigne, of Wells (M.P. for the city in 1447), granted to the Dean and Chapter a pension of ten marks of annual rent out of his one-third of the Manor of Newton Placey, in the parish of North Petherton, for the support of a chaplain to celebrate masses, and other divine offices, in the chapel attached to Bishop Bubwith's Almshouse, and for a yearly anniversary in the church of St. Cuthbert to pray for the souls of Richard Bruton, and William Gascoigne, formerly of Bruggewater, their parents, ancestors, and all the faithful departed. For the anniversary, the Dean and Chapter bound themselves and their successors to pay a yearly pension of 6s. 8d. to the Chaplain,

which he was to appropriate as follows: to the Vicar of St. Cuthbert, 4d.; to every chaplain and clerk there, 2d.; to the Mayor for his superintendence, 8d.; to the churchwardens, for the bells, 8d.; and the residue to the almspeople.

A.D. 1473. Henry Goddislond, by will, orders that his body shall be buried in the churchyard of St. Cuthbert's church, at Wells, in front of the image of the Holy Trinity, before the porch of the church. Gives to the high altar, 16d.; to the altar of the Virgin Mary, 12d.; to the altar of the Trinity, 12d.; to the altar of St. John the Baptist, 12d.; to the altar of S. James, 12d.; to the fabrick of the cathedral, 5s.; to the fabric of the church of Wookey, 12d.; to the fabric of the church of Westbury, 12d.; to the church of Axbrugge, 12d.; of the church of Banwelle, 12d.; to the church of Evercriche, 12d. To the Alms-house of Wells, 8d. A chaplain to celebrate for one year, in the church of St. Cuthbert, at Wells, for the souls of himself, his parents, and benefactors, and to have 8 marks for his salary. To his son or daughter that might be "*in ventre*" of Juliana, his wife, at the time of his death, he leaves 5 marks; to Juliana, his wife, the tenement where he lived, until such child, if a son, reached 15 years, when he was to have it for all the term for which testator held it; but if a daughter, or such son should die before 15, then the tenement to remain to said Juliana for said term. If said Juliana and such son should die before such term expired, then the tenement to go to the Hospital of St. John the Baptist at Wells, the inmates thereof to pray for his soul, and those of his parents, and all the faithful deceased. To Robert Broke he leaves a trimmed gown of sanguine color; to John Jonys, a gown of sanguine; to John Standerwyke, his horse, then in the charge of Robert Broke. To the poor on the day of his burial, 10s. to be distributed, one halfpenny each. The residue to his wife Juliana, his executrix. John Standerwyke and Robert Broke to be supervisors. Proved before the Bishop's Commissary, 23rd January, 1473.

A.D. 1578.—William Jones, Canon of Wells, one of the executors of Robert Atwell, gave (by deed) of the goods of the said Robert Atwell, £40, for charitable purposes; and directed that a sermon should be preached and paid for out of the interest of the £40, yearly, for ever.

A.D. 1593.—The Lady Anne Sherington, widow of Sir Henry Sherington, of Lacock, Wilts, gave (by deed) £50 to the Corporation of Wells, and out of the interest they were to pay for a sermon to be preached on every Sunday next after Trinity Sunday, for ever.

A. D. 1604.—Henry Llewellyn (founder of the almshouses in Priest-Row) gave to the corporation, by his will, (dated 20th July, 1604) in the following words: "Item. I give to the corporation of the Towne of Welles, twenty pounds; and my will is the said corporation shall pay yearly unto the repairing of St. Cuthbert's church in Welles, the sum of twenty shillings, for ever, out of the use of the said twenty pounds." The money was paid to the corporation, as appears by a deed still remaining with the muniments of the almshouse, of which the following is a copy:—

"This Indenture made the one and thirtieth day of October, in the thirteenth years of the raigne of o'r Sou'aig'n Lord JAMES by the grace of God of England Fraunce and Ireland Kinge, Defend'r of the Faith, &c. BETWEENE Will'm Moore, of Welles, in the countie of Som'sett, gent., executor of the last will and testament of Henrie Lewellin, late of Welles afforesaid, gent., deceased, of the one p'tie, and the Maior, Masters and Burgesses of the cittie or burrough of Welles, in the countie of Som'sett aforesaid, of the other p'tie: WITNESSETH that whereas the said Will'm Moore hath well and trullie satisfied, contented, and paid vnto the said Maior, Masters, and Burgesses before the ensealinge and del'vie of these p'sents, the some of twentie pounds of lawfull money of England, wherof and wherew'th the said Maior, Masters, and Burgesses doe by these p'sents acknowledge themselves satisfied and paid, and therof, and ev'ie p'te therof, the said Maior, Masters, and Burgesses for them and theyre successo's doe by these p'sents, acquite, release and discharge the said Will'm Moore, his execut'o's and administrat's, and eu'ie of them by these p'sents, w'ch said some of twentie pounds, he the said Henrie Lewellin, by his last will and testament, gave to the Corporaçon of the Towne of Welles, and willed that the saide corporaçon should pay yearlie to the reparaçon of St. Cuthb'te church, in Welles, Twentie shillings forever, as by the same will appeareth. Now WITNESSETH these p'sents that the said Maior, Masters, and Burgesses for them, their successo's and assigns, doe coven'nte p'mise and graunt to and w'th the said Will'm Moore, his execut's administ's and assigns, and eu'y of them by these p'sents, that they the said Mayor, Masters, and Burgesses, their successors and assigns, shall and will, yearlie, pay one annuitie or yearly rent of twentie shillings of lawfull mony of England vnto the churchwarden or churchwardens of the p'sahe church of St. Cuth'b'te, in Welles afforesaid for the time beinge, at or vpon the feaste day of St. Jerom, being the last day of September, yearlye, or w'thin ten days next after the said feaste, the same beinge lawfullye demanded, at the checker, or com'on counsell howse of the saide Mayor, Masters, and Burgesses, their successors or assigns, for the trew payment wherof the said Mayor, Masters, and Burgesses doe bind them and their successors firmlye by these p'sents. IN WITNESS wherof to th' one p'te of these p'sent indentures, remaynyng w'th the said Mayor, Masters, and Burgesses, the said Will'm Moore hath set his hand and seale: and to the other p't remaynyng with the said Will'm Moore, the said Mayor, Masters, and Burgesses have set their com'on seale. GEAVERN the day and years above written."

[The Corporate common seale is affixed to this document].

The yearly payment of 20s. was made for many years, but it has long since ceased.

A.D. 1610.—Mrs. Thomazin Adams, of Wells, widow of John Adams, Esq., gave to the Corporation of Wells, £20, to be lent to two poor burgesses, and she directed that a sermon should be preached in the church of St. Cuthbert, on the second Sunday after Easter, yearly, for ever.

A.D. 1613.—Eleanor Bull, widow of William Bull, Esq., of Wells, gave to the corporation, £20, to be lent to poor burgesses of Wells; and she directed that a sermon should be preached yearly in the church of St. Cuthbert for ever.

A.D. 1613.—Nathaniel Still, Esq., son and executor of Bishop Still, founder of Still's Almshouse, gave 10s. for a sermon, yearly, on St. John the Evangelist's Day, for ever, to commemorate the founding of Bishop Bubwith's and his father's almshouses, and the Almspeople were required to attend the church on the occasion.

A.D. 1615.—James Godwyn, of Wells, gent., in his will, refers to a gift of £20, to be lent to poor decayed parishioners of Wells, and desired that the persons benefited thereby should contribute towards the reparation of the south aisle of the chancel of the church of St. Cuthbert, where he desired, in the following words, to be buried:—"Firste, I commende my soule into the hands of Almighty God, and my bodye to be buried in the northe side of of the southe ile, where the little dore is in the church of St. Cuthbert, betwene the toome of my brother John and the wall of the said ile;" and in another part of his will, he gave the following curious directions for his own tomb:—"And lastly, my desire is that I may have erected vpon me a plain tombe, fixed in the stone which is laid vpon my corpes, (the same to be of alabaster, or some other strong stone), p'porçoning owt the shape of my body, as yt shall be prepared for my grave, after my decease; and that there be aboute the same tombe (for preserving thereof) a frame made w'th spickes, or barrs of iron, made w'th the leuell of the p'ticion from the chauncell wall, w'th a strong bond of iron round about, and likewise compasse over the same, fixed into the wall for strengthening thereof; and the tombe to be abowte a foote higher than the pavement in the church in that place whereas my tombe shall stand: and engraven in some stone, or brasse sette in the chancell walle, the day of my dep'ture owt

of this worlde : and the said tombe to be fashioned in this ma'ner —videl't—w'th the forme of a pillowe vnder my head, my body lying thereon as yt were on my back, my leggs streight owt, with my feete one athurte another as I have com'only vsed (in my life-time) to lye in my bedd ; my hands closed together framed upright, restinge on my breast, and the shape of the sight of my eies fixed towards heaven, where I hope to receave the true comfort of my soule's health, through the innumerable meritts of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the vertue of his death and passion, and of his moste precious bloud shedd for me, into whose hands I most humbly com'ende my soule." Every vestige of this costly memorial has long since disappeared, though the name of Godwyn could be seen on a gravestone at the spot indicated in the will, only a few years ago.

A.D. 1623.—Mrs. Hester Hooper als Small, of Wells, widow, gave £10 to the corporation, for the use of the poor of Wells ; and £5 to be lent out, and from the interest thereof 6s. 8d. were to be paid for a sermon in St. Cuthbert's church, on Ash Wednesday, yearly, for ever.

A.D. 1638.—Walter Bricke (founder of the "Burgesses' Almshouse") gave 10s. to be paid on the 15 Dec. to the vicar, or his deputy, yearly for a sermon in St. Cuthbert's church, on Sunday next preceding St. Andrew's Day, for ever.

A.D. 1675.—Adrian Hickes (one of the founders of the Bluecoat School) gave 20s. for a sermon in St. Cuthbert's church, on the 10th October, yearly, for ever.

A.D. 1703.—Alexander Baron gave 10s. for a sermon in St. Cuthbert's church, on the 1st August, yearly, for ever.

A.D. 1713.—Archibald Harper, founder of the Woolcombers' Almshouse, by his will, dated 5th May, 1711, made the following gifts :—Item. I give and bequeath unto the Vicar of St. Cuthbert, in Wells, that shall be at the time of my death ten shillings, to be paid to him to preach a sermon the next Sunday after my decease. And further I give and bequeath unto the Vicar of St. Cuthbert, in Welles aforesaid, for the time being, and to his successors, Vicars of the parish of St. Cuthbert, in Wells aforesaid, successively for ever, ten shillings yearly, to be paid to him to preach a sermon yearly in St. Cuthbert's church in Wells aforesaid, upon Sunday that shall be yearly next immediately after the day of my decease ; the said ten shillings yearly to be

paid out of my ground called the George ground, or George Close, lying in Wells aforesaid, by the possessors or occupiers thereof; and I doe further hereby charge the said ground with the payment therof as a yearly rent charge." Then follow powers for the Vicar for the time being to recover the rent charge by distress, if in arrear for thirty days, or to sue for the same as he should think fit. The testator died May 11th, 1713.

Ezekiel Nash gave money for a small yearly gift of bread to the poor, and, out of the interest of his donation, he directed that one guinea should be paid to the minister for a sermon in St. Cuthbert's church, on the 8th March yearly, for ever; also to the clerk and sexton 5s. each for their attendance.

About ten years ago there remained chained to an old desk a copy of Fox's book of Martyrs, in a very tattered and broken condition. It was printed in 1632, and probably given to the Church of St. Cuthbert between that date and 1641, when the next edition was published. Copies were placed in many churches by private individuals, there being, as far as I know, no public order for so doing, except in the injunctions of 1571, in which cathedral churches alone are mentioned. All that now remains of this old relic is thrown aside out of sight. I have not found any trace of a parochial library, which is sometimes found in churches. In the earlier records there are occasional notices of gifts of M.S. books to the church, but nothing about a library or such-like collection of books.





## The Church Plate.

**T**HE plate belonging to the church of St. Cuthbert is interesting and of considerable value, but no portion of it dates prior to the Reformation. The following is a brief account of this plate :—

A large handsomely-chased silver gilt cover of a chalice (the gift of an unknown benefactor), thus inscribed,—

“1573. SAINT CUTHBERT IN WELLES.”

Nothing is now known of the Chalice itself.

Two silver Flagons inscribed,—

“IN HONOREM SANCTISS'I REDEMPTORIS MEI JESU CHRISTI.”

On one of the Flagons,—

“QUID RETRIBUAM D'NO PRO EJUS BENIGNITATIBUS OMNIB'  
ERGA ME ?”

*Psal.* 116, 11.

On the other,—

“ACCIPIAM CALICEM SALUTIS ET NOMEN DNI. INVOCABIT.”

*Psal.* 116, 12.

These flagons are each engraved with a shield charged arms, “party per pale, paly of seven az., and ar.,” bearing some resemblance to the arms of Barkham, Lord Mayor of London, in 1621. To this shield is added the motto, “*Recta Certa*,” and on each flagon is the following further inscription,—

“ECCLESIE PAROCHIALIS S. CUTHBERTI IN WELLES.

“EZECHIEL BARKHAM, GEN., PAROCHIANUS DONAVIT, 1639.”

This Ezekiel Barkham was one of the founders of the Wells Blue Coat School.

A silver gilt paten thus inscribed,—

“THE GIF OF CORNELOVS WATES AND AN HIS WIF TO SAYNT  
CVDBERDES IN WELLES, THE 8 OF JYNE, 1644.”

A large silver paten thus inscribed,—

“THE GIFT OF ELIZABETH MATTOCK, WIDOW, WIFE OF  
ARTHUR MATTOCK, OF THIS CITY, GENTLEMAN, 1683.”

On the bottom, the initials E. M. are engraved. There are two shields of arms engraved on this paten, viz., one charged with three lions rampant; and the other with a chevron between three fleurs-de-lis, being a very near resemblance to the arms of the Matokes, or Matticks, of Hertfordshire and Yorkshire.

Thomas Mattocke was Mayor of Wells in 1666 and 1686. He gave the two staves, with silver ornaments, for use of the High Constables. The burial place of this old Wells family is in the chancel, towards its junction with the nave.

A silver-gilt Chalice, handsomely chased. (no inscription).

A silver paten inscribed,—

“THE GIFT OF JACOB WORRALL, MAYOR, 1719.”

This Jacob Worrall was Mayor in 1705, 1714, and 1719. He was a surgeon with an extensive practice in Wells. Married 14th February, 1705, Elizabeth Smyth, of Wells. By his will, dated 18th February, 1720, he gave 20s. a year to buy four coats for four poor boys of Wells. His daughter married Joshua Counsell, Esq., of Wells, and their descendants have for many years resided in the city of Gloucester.

A small silver-gilt paten and a silver-gilt Chalice, originally both plain, but now inscribed,—

“PRESENTED TO THE VICAR OF ST. CUTHBERT’S, WELLS, BY  
W. WESTLEY, ESQ., A. D. 1701.”

There is a memorandum affixed within the cover of the vestry book in Mr. Westley’s handwriting, having reference to his gift:—

“This Chalice and Paten is dedicated to Almighty God’s service, and given to St. Cuthbert’s parish, Wells, to remain with the Vicar thereof and his successors for private and decent administration of the holy sacram’t of the Lord’s supper to such sick persons who piously desire the same and cannot attend the publique solemnity thereof.”

“Wm. Westley.”

On one of the donation boards, affixed to the walls of the tower, the following appears:—

“WILLIAM WESTLEY, ESQ., GAVE AN ENGINE TO THIS CITY TO



BE USED IN CASE OF FIRE; AS ALSO A SILVER CHALICE AND PATEN, DOUBLE GUILT, WEIGHING 25 oz. 10 DWTS. A COMMON PRAYER BOOK, TWO DAMASK NAPKINS, AND A BOX, TO BE KEPT BY THE VICAR OF ST. CUTHBERTS FOR THE MORE DECENT ADMINISTRATION OF THE HOLY SACRAMENT TO SICK PERSONS THAT CANNOT ATTEND THE PUBLICK SERVICE; AND ALSO TWELVE BUCKETS."

Mr. Westley lies buried in the nave of Wells Cathedral, where a flat stone may still be seen thus inscribed,—

"IN MEMORY OF SARAH, THE WIFE OF WILLIAM WESTLEY, GENT., WHO DIED YE 4TH OF JUNE, 1701.

H. S. I. GULIEMI WESTLEY, DE CIVITAT. WELLEN. ARMIGER. OBIIT SEPT 23, ANNO DOMINI, 1719. ÆTATIS 84."

With the plate is a small perforated silver spoon, the use of which is not now known.

In 1856, the then In-parish churchwarden, Mr. John Willmott, very commendably prepared a list of the church plate, and inscribed it on the cover of the vestry book, a record which it is hoped will remain for many generations.





## Late Restorations and Improvements.

**R**ENOVATIONS and improvements on a minor scale had been from time to time effected by several successive churchwardens. In the time of Mr. Samuel Hobbs, who filled the office of In-parish churchwarden, in 1840-41, improvements were made by the removal or alteration of several of the high curtained pews, which had for many years marred the appearance of the interior of the church. More than this, it is right to mention another circumstance in connection with Mr. Hobbs's year of office, during which he, with no little personal trouble, collected materials from various sources, and compiled an account, in an epitomized form, of the minor charities in the city, most of which are more or less under the management of the ministers and churchwardens of St. Cuthbert, and this book is almost the only authentic source of information now in use on the subject of the church charities. Several of the successors of Mr. Hobbs effected improvements of more or less importance. Mr. Henry Powell held the office of churchwarden in 1847-8, and 1848-9. During his official years some important renovations were made, especially in the north transept, and the adjoining "Trinity" chapel, in the course of which, the ancient reredos in the east wall of the transept was discovered. The roof of the chancel was added, and the pillars there were carefully cleansed in 1851 and 1852, during the time of Mr. W. Fry, the cost being defrayed by a subscription, and portions of the wood carving were executed by several different friends of the vicar.

Mr. John Willmott was appointed churchwarden, and con-

tinued in office for the unusually long period of four years, viz., from 1853 to 1856-7. During that period extensive and important changes were made. For many years, a general renovation of the interior of the church had been contemplated, and especially the removal of the high, box-like pews, and galleries in the south transept, and "Coward's" chapel, and two others which were suspended (one on each side) between the two easternmost pillars of the nave. The Rev. Henry Watson Barnard, the vicar, had, during his life, been mainly instrumental in adding the present east window, renovating the chancel (which was newly roofed), and in accomplishing other important repairs. His melancholy and unexpected death, in 1855, induced an earnest desire among many of his friends and parishioners to testify their respect for the memory of their deceased pastor, and their sorrow for the great loss they had sustained, by attempting a fulfilment of his often-expressed wishes, by carrying on the work of restoration. A meeting was held at the Town-hall, on the 3rd August, 1855, the Mayor being chairman. It was then resolved that, in the opinion of the meeting, the useful labours of the Rev. H. W. Barnard, not only as vicar, but in various other capacities, and the very general expression of regret for his loss, justified the creation of some public permanent testimonial to his memory. After some discussion, it was determined to erect a mortuary window, and to commence a re-arrangement of the seats in the chancel and other parts of the church. A committee was formed, consisting of Robert Charles Tudway, Esq., M.P., the Mayor (Mr. Henry Bernard), Messrs. Jno. Willmott and William Adams (churchwardens), and Messrs. Edmund Davies, James Garrod, W. J. S. Foster, W. I. Welsh, William C. Berryman, William Fry, and Henry Powell, for raising the necessary funds by subscription. To this list the Dean of Wells, the new vicar, was subsequently added. Several intermediate meetings were held, and on the 27th December, 1855, the family of the late vicar having left it to the committee to decide on the nature of the testimonial to be specially dedicated to his memory, it was determined not to erect a mortuary window, but to substitute some more simple and less expensive monument, so as to leave a larger fund for the general restoration of the church. It was also resolved to publish advertisements for designs and working plans for the restoration.

This was done, and several sets of plans were sent in, one of which, by Mr. H. Crisp, of Bristol, was ultimately selected.

The amount raised by subscriptions amounted to £680, and this sum was expended chiefly in removing the old pews in the chancel and its aisles, and north transept, and replacing them by the introduction of open benches of red deal.

The Committee decided that the special memorial to the memory of the deceased vicar should be a mural tablet of mediæval design, and this was provided and inserted in the east wall of the north aisle of the chancel, the record on which is as follows :—

"In memory of the Rev. Henry Watson Barnard, Canon Residentiary of the Cathedral Church of Wells, and Vicar of St. Cuthbert, born 10th January, 1792, died of Cholera at Granada, 9th July, 1855. Honoring the piety which projected, and the zeal which reared three additional churches of God in the parish of St. Cuthbert; and loving the remembrance of one, who in following his divine master, went about doing good among the sick and needy, his parishioners and friends have commenced the restoration of the parish church in which he ministered for a period of twenty-three years, and have erected this tablet in token of affection for him 'who being dead yet speaketh.'

"Erected 1857."

The allusion in this tablet to the erection of the three district churches during the incumbency of the Rev. H. W. Barnard, should, in justice to his memory, be noticed at greater length. These churches were erected in the populous and extensive hamlet of East Horrington, for that hamlet, West Horrington, and Chilcote; Coxley, for that large hamlet and Polsham; and Easton, for that hamlet. The first was consecrated, October 4th, 1838; the second, June 28th, 1840; and the third, February 1st, 1844. The entire cost of all was provided by subscriptions, raised chiefly under the influence and superintendence of the vicar, whose labours and anxieties for many years, in connection with the raising and bringing to completion these important works must have been very great; but those labours and anxieties were lightened by the consciousness that what he was then doing would bring great and everlasting benefits to succeeding generations. In these laudable works of restoration and repair in the church, the untiring energy of the In-parish churchwarden, Mr. J. Willmott, elicited frequent acknowledgment, and well-deserved public approval, and the same may be said of every member of the committee.

The successor of Mr. Willmott in the office of churchwarden, Mr. Edwin Hippisley, continued the work of restoration and

renovation in different parts of the church, especially in carefully clearing much of the stone work from the thick coats of colouring and white-wash which had, during several centuries, been put on, and in removing the rough plaster on the walls, and re-covering them with stucco. In all that Mr. Hippisley did, his professional skill as an architect was a sufficient guarantee that what he did was well done, the evidences of which can still be seen in the church.

In 1862 Mr. Joseph John Tasker was elected In-parish churchwarden, and held the office three years. During that period he effected extensive and important improvements, including a rearrangement of the seats in the south transept, and in the chancel some of which were appropriated for the use of the choir. But that which will more deservedly perpetuate Mr. Tasker's memory through many generations, in connection with the history of St. Cuthbert's church, is the removal of a modern organ gallery of a most unsightly and unsuitable character, (by which the noble tower arch was opened), and the demolition of an apartment under the vaulting of the tower, which had been used as a vestry room, thus opening an uninterrupted view from the eastern to the western end of the church. The removal of the organ gallery involved the necessity of finding another place for the organ, which was in a dilapidated state, as well as providing a new instrument. Both these objects were accomplished during Mr. Tasker's years of office ; and that is not all for which his fellow-townsmen have to thank him. He removed the hideous altar screen, and thus made way for the beautiful reredos which has taken its place.

The Vicar and Churchwardens issued the following circular, soliciting pecuniary aid in enabling them to accomplish the contemplated works :—

Wells, November, 1863.

Dear Sir,

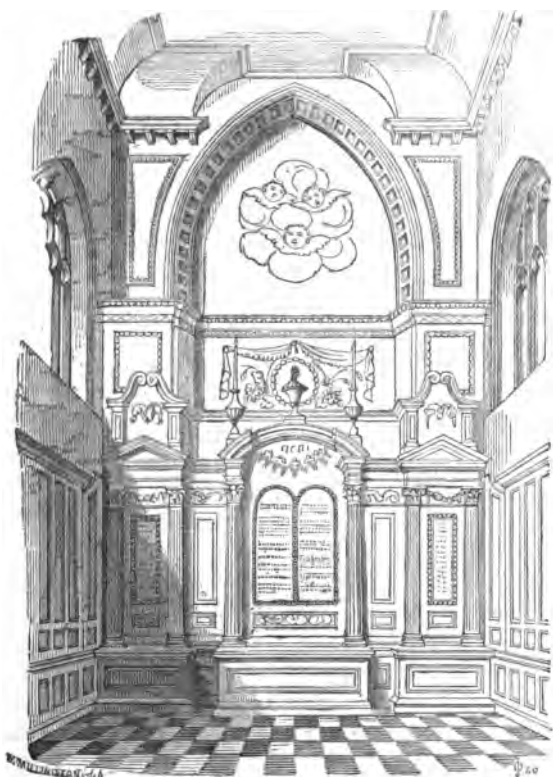
We have felt it our duty to set on foot a subscription for the purpose of repairing the Organ of St. Cuthbert's Church, which has been pronounced in its present state to be wholly unserviceable.

We desire to remove it from its present situation, and to place it, when restored, near the Chancel, in some spot to be finally approved by a competent architect.

Our purpose also is to take down the Gallery upon which the Organ now stands, and to open to view the West Window, now entirely lost ; and so to carry out (in part) the plan of restoration commenced eight years ago.

You may be quite assured that no step will be taken in any of the details of this plan without the sanction of the architect.

We have good reason to think that the Organ may be repaired, and placed



THE EAST END OF THE CHANCEL AS IT APPEARED BEFORE THE  
ERECTION OF THE PRESENT REREDOS.



in its new position, and the West Window opened to view as above described, at the cost of about £600. Towards this sum the Lord Bishop has most kindly promised £25; the Dean and Chapter, £100; the Dean of Wells (Vicar of St. Cuthbert's), £50; Mrs. Tudway, £50; the Right Hon. Sir William Hayter, Bart., M.P., £25; Captain Jolliffe, M.P., £25; J. H. Parker, Esq., £10; and the Worshipful the Mayor of Wells, J. G. Everett, Esq., £10.

The reparation of the Organ has become a matter of necessity; and the opportunity should not, we think, be lost, of taking a second step towards the restoration of one of the most beautiful churches in Somerset.

An early reply will greatly oblige, and we earnestly hope that you will aid us with a liberal contribution.

Your faithful Friends,

G. H. S. JOHNSON, Vicar.

JOSEPH JOHN TASKER, }  
WILLIAM LAX. } Churchwardens.

Sufficient funds were soon forthcoming, and the work was begun, and ere long brought to a satisfactory conclusion. The new organ was placed in the north aisle of the chancel, a position which met with general approval. The builder of the organ was Mr. W. Sweetland, of Bath, the result of whose undertaking was the production of an instrument fully worthy the edifice in which it is placed. The total cost of the organ was about £363, exclusive of the value of the old organ; and of the other works adverted to in the circular letter, the cost was about £300. The ceremony of formally "opening" the organ took place on the 29th Nov., 1864, when the Mayor and Corporation, with a large number of parishioners, attended divine service; the sermon being preached by the Right Hon. and Right Reverend Lord Auckland, the then Bishop of the Diocese, from the text, Joshua 24, v. 14. The offertory on the occasion amounted to the sum of £37.

The organ removed by Mr. Tasker was erected in 1820, partly by means of subscription, aided by a gift from the Corporation on the 9th of May, 1820, when it was "resolved to subscribe forty guineas for erecting a new organ in the parish church of St. Cuthbert."

The organ which preceded the instrument so removed was the gift of Dr. Robert Creighton, one of the Canons residentiary of the cathedral, as will be seen in the following extract from the corporate records, under the date of 13th March, 1715.

"At the same time the House being acquainted that the Rev. Doctor Creighton was disposed to present this parish with an organ, this House heartily concurred therewith, and requested Mr. Recorder to wait on Dr. Creighton, and return him the thanks of this House for his good intention."

Dr. Robert Creighton was a son of the Bishop of the same name (who died in 1672), and himself an eminent composer of church music, some of which is still frequently used in the cathe-



dral services. There had been some kind of organ in the church before that which was given by Dr. Creyghton. Notices of such an instrument are frequent in the city records.

In the commencement, carrying on, and bringing to a close the important changes effected by Mr. Tasker, the parishioners of St. Cuthbert, present and future, owe him a debt of gratitude, as well as to the Very Rev. the Dean of Wells, the then vicar of the parish, and others who liberally contributed the means for bringing to a successful end these great improvements in the church.

On Mr. Tasker relinquishing office, Mr. John Kelway was appointed to succeed him. He zealously continued the work of restoration and improvement. The floor of the chancel, and within the communion rails was laid with Minton's encaustic tiles, and the elegant communion rail, the mediæval iron screen on each side of the chancel, and the corona, with which the eastern end of the church is lighted, were all added, as well as the decoration of the eastern wall of the chancel. The new reredos was one of the most important works executed during Mr. Kelway's term of office, and to him the credit is mainly due for originating and carrying through this important addition to the interior of the church. From the first it was determined that the work should be wholly done by, or through the medium of Freemasons. A managing committee was formed and a circular published, of which the following is a copy :—

#### BENEVOLENT LODGE OF FREEMASONS.—No. 446.

Restoration of the Church of St. Cuthbert, in the City of Wells.

This Church is an ancient edifice, presenting many points of interest both in its construction and history. The noble tower is acknowledged to be one of the finest of its date. Like others of our parish churches, St. Cuthbert's has, since the Reformation, severely suffered from iconoclastic zeal, and later still, from mis-called "Restoration."

About twenty years ago the Rev. Henry Watson Barnard, the then Vicar, (himself a Free-mason), commenced the work of restoration, by putting in a new east window, filled with stained glass, and replacing the plaster ceiling and cornice of the chancel with wood, somewhat in harmony with the roof of the nave, which is one of the best examples of church carpentry extant. His untimely death, in 1855, stayed the progress of renovation, until his parishioners and friends, deeming it a suitable tribute to his memory to follow up the work which he had begun, raised and expended a sum of about £700 in further restorations; but much was left to be accomplished. Lately the further sum of £400 has been raised, and devoted chiefly to the cost of removing an unsightly organ gallery, and throwing open the lofty western arch of the nave, and the beautiful vaulting of the western entrance; in raising and refitting the chancel floor and seats, and providing a new organ. Amongst other objectionable and unsuitable erections in the chancel, was an ugly corinthian altar screen, of oak, which concealed the lower part of the eastern win-

dow. The recent removal of this screen exposed a bare and rough wall, and this has suggested to some Freemasons, that, to replace it with a suitable reredos, would be a work not ungrateful nor uncongenial to the Brotherhood.

At a recent meeting of the Benevolent Lodge, No. 446, a sum of £25 was unanimously voted from the Lodge funds as the commencement of a subscription towards this work; a committee was formed, and several brethren added their names to the subscription list. The kind and liberal spirit in which the proposal has been received, by many of the Fraternity, has encouraged us to appeal for subscriptions to the Lodges and brethren generally; should such appeal meet with a liberal response, we shall hope not only to erect the reredos, but to restore other portions, if not the whole of the interior of the chancel. It will, however, be our aim and design, that the work thus to be accomplished shall be a work complete in itself.

As many an ancient structure owes its origin, the beauty of its design, and excellence of its completion to the skill and a labour of the Brotherhood of earlier times, so have the Fraternity of the present day, in no small measure contributed to restore or repair the defects and injuries which time and bad taste have inflicted on the works of their ancestors; and we would fain hope to see within this noble edifice some distinct portion of its restoration which shall be recognised by succeeding generations, to be the work, and do credit to the taste and liberality of Freemasons.

We inclose a list of subscriptions, and earnestly hope you will return it, with the amount of your donation, as early as convenient.

COMMITTEE:

John Kelway, W.M., Chairman.

Henry Box, P.M.

Geo. Fawcett, J.W.

Wm. Berryman, Jun., S.W.

Tho. Serel, Secretary.

Dated January 2nd, 1865.

Within a short time the subscriptions were found to be sufficient to warrant the committee in engaging the services of Mr. James Forsyth, whose ability as a sculptor was well known, not only in Wells, from the many examples of his work in the cathedral church, but also in still more important and numerous examples of his skill in many ecclesiastical and other edifices in various parts of England, as well as in different parts of the world.

A design was obtained, submitted to the Bishop and the Vicar, and other authorities, and finally approved. A contract was then entered into with Mr. Forsyth at the sum of £300, one of the stipulations of which was that the work should be ready for fixing and "opening" in the month of July, 1867. Communications were opened with the Provincial Grand Master of Somerset, Alexander William Adair, Esq., and the Deputy P. Grand Master, Captain Henry Bridges, both of whom zealously lent their aid in giving effect to the ceremony of formally "opening" the reredos, and presenting it to the inhabitants of Wells. Many distinguished and eminent Masons in the province of Somerset, as well as others from more distant localities, willingly and fraternally consented to take part in the presentation, which was fixed for the 1st of July, 1867. On that occasion upwards of

two hundred members of the mystic craft met in this ancient city, in which are found so many and magnificent examples of the skill, zeal, and piety of early Freemasons. A procession was formed at the local Lodge-room (the City Council Chamber), and proceeded thence to the parish church in the following order :—

Two Tylers,  
Bands,  
Two Provincial Grand Stewards,  
The Members of the Lodges in the Province and  
other Visiting Brethren.  
The Provincial Grand Officers.  
The R. W. the D. P. G. M. Capt. Bridges.  
Mace Bearer—P. G. S. B.—Mace Bearer.  
The R. W. the P. G. M. The Mayor of Wells,  
A. W. Adair, Esq. W. C. Berryman, Esq.  
The Mayor of Bath, Wm. Thomson, Esq.  
Magistrates and Corporation of Wells.  
Inhabitants of Wells, and others.

At the church door, the procession was received by the Vicar and clergy of the city. A full choral service was performed, under the direction of Mr. C. W. Lavington, the cathedral organist, in which the cathedral and parochial choirs took part. A sermon was preached by the Provincial Grand Chaplain, the Rev. W. W. Martin, from the text the 20th verse of the 2nd chapter of Habakkuk, "The Lord is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him." At the close of the service, the procession returned to the Town Hall and partook of luncheon. The Cathedral, the Bishop's Palace, the Deanery, and other parts of the city were inspected by the visitors, after which the Vicar and Mrs. Johnson liberally provided refreshments at the Deanery for all comers.

The entire design and execution of the work has deservedly elicited unqualified praise. The material is of Caen stone, and the subject represented is "The last Supper." The work is divided into three compartments, but the subject is unbroken, and the time selected for the representation is the breaking of the bread, and on the table are to be seen the bread, the paten, and the chalice. The central figure is our Lord, on whose left shoulder, John, the best beloved of all the Apostles, reclines his head. The other apostles are represented on either side. The grouping of all is excellent. The identity of Judas cannot be mistaken. He seems to be turning away as if ashamed to be looked upon by his Lord. The drapery of all the figures is gracefully and effectively treated. In a niche on the south side





is the figure of St. Cuthbert, the patron saint of the church, and on the other side is a statue of St. Andrew, the patron saint of the cathedral. The entire subject is surmounted by elegant, appropriate, and richly carved crocketed finials, and tabernacle work, the spring of each canopy being also adorned with exquisitely carved angels, bearing emblems of the crucifixion.

The accompanying illustrations will convey a correct knowledge of the past as well as the present appearance of the eastern end of the church, and enable succeeding generations to judge how great and important were the changes effected in the year 1867. A small brass plate, concealed by the communion table, thus records the erection of this admirable composition :—

“PRESENTED BY FREEMASONS,

A. D. 1867.

Committee.	{	John Kelway, W. M.	Benevolent Lodge, Wells.
		Henry Box, P. M.	
		W. Berryman, S. W.	
		Geo. Fawcett, J. W.	
		Tho. Serel, Sec.	

A. W. Adair, Provincial Grand Master.

H. Bridges, D. P. G. M.

G. H. S. Johnson, M.A., Vicar.

John Kelway, Churchwarden.

J. Forsyth, Sculptor.”

The works already noticed, with which Mr. Kelway's name is connected, are not all that he did. During many centuries the soil in the churchyard had been so much raised, that the interior of the church, near the walls, had become damp, and the fabric itself had for a long time been seriously injured. The whole of this soil was removed, to the depth of several feet, and new drains were laid, by which the water from the roof is conveyed into the adjacent sewers.

Before Mr. Kelway vacated his office, he was chiefly instrumental in effectually heating the church, the cost being defrayed by a public collection, aided by a considerable donation from his own means. The cost of the several works was,—

For the Reredos,	£	s.	d.
Mr. Forsyth, the Sculptor, ... ..	300	0	0
Printing, postages, architect's fees and incidental ex-			
penses ... ..	17	0	0
	<hr/>		
	317	0	0
For the Chancel, including corona, ... ..	204	14	3
For warming, including stoves, pipes, &c., ... ..	107	0	0
For the churchyard, including drainage, ... ..	56	4	3
	<hr/>		
	684	18	6

Of all the improvements in the church, the windows must not be forgotten. In the Trinity chapel and the north transept, some important renovations were effected by Mr. H. Powell. The east window is by Wailes, of Newcastle, and was placed in its position in 1851. The cost was defrayed by subscriptions, collected by Miss Henrietta Tudway, and Miss Frances Barnard, one of the daughters of the then Vicar, the Rev. H. W. Barnard. The small window in the north wall of the chancel was given by the late R. C. Tudway, Esq., M.P., and was painted by Mrs. Tudway. The subject illustrated is the crucifixion; and the different symbols are treated with much artistic skill. The entire design reflects great credit on the taste of Mrs. Tudway as the painter of the window. Two other memorial windows were placed in the church by the family of C. C. Tudway, Esq., and will be noticed in another part of this book. The latest, and by no means the least important, has been the addition of a new window which has been placed in the western wall of the tower. For this the parishioners have to thank the present churchwarden, Mr. Francis Fry, whose name, in connection with that office, will thus be perpetuated to future generations. This window is the work of Messrs. Clayton and Bell, the well-known artists in glass, of Regent-street, London. The main subject selected for illustration is Christian Baptism, though other subjects are included in the design. In the two upper openings of the stone work are figures of the prophets Joel and Haggai, and in two other openings, immediately below, are figures of Zacharia and Malachi. All these prophets prophesied on subjects more or less connected with Baptism. In a line with these, in two other openings, are two other figures, that on the south side being St. Cuthbert, the patron saint of the church, and on the other side St. Andrew, the patron saint of the cathedral. In the larger openings below, three subjects are represented, all of which are alluded to in our baptismal service; viz., in the two openings on the south side, "Entry into the Ark;" in the two middle openings, "Baptism of our Lord;" and in the two openings on the north side, "Passage of the Red Sea." These may be regarded as the principal subjects in the general arrangement. In the six openings in the lower part of the window, six different subjects are represented; viz., in No. 1, on the south side, St. Peter baptising Cornelius; 2, St. Paul and

Ananias ; 3, St. Paul and the Gaoler ; 4, St. Philip baptizing the Eunuch ; 5, St. Augustine baptizing King Ethelbert, the first Christian King ; and in the northern opening, Modern Baptism, intended to pourtray the vestments for ministration, and the ordinary attire in use at the period of the insertion of the window. At the foot of the window is an inscription recording the gift of the window,—“ To the glory of God this window was given by Mr. Francis Fry, Churchwarden, MDCCCLXXII.” The entire design has been generally approved as a work of art, and as well sustaining the reputation and artistic skill of Messrs. Clayton and Bell. The total cost was £250, besides the outlay for repairing the stone work, which in some parts was much decayed. The formal ceremony of “ opening ” and presenting the window took place on the 18th July, 1872, and on the following Sunday the Mayor and Corporation attended divine service, when the vicar preached an appropriate sermon, in the course of which especial allusion was made to the gift of this window to the adornment of our parish church.







## Ancient Inventories of Ornaments, &c.,

BELONGING TO THE CHURCH.

**L**IKE very many other parochial churches, that of St. Cuthbert, in Wells, has few records relating to its history. In early times charters and other muniments of a public nature, were preserved with much greater care than they have been during the last two or three centuries. I have noticed elsewhere that in St. Cuthbert's church there was an apartment purposely set apart for the safe keeping of the title deeds, manuscripts, and ornaments appertaining to it. This is now devoted to a very different and much less useful purpose, and there is not, either in the church, or elsewhere, any place whatever provided for the reception and preservation of books or documents belonging to the parish. Nearly all our old parochial records have been lost, and those of modern date have little care bestowed on them. Unfortunately, few persons possess much taste for such matters, and thus books and manuscripts, valuable in relation to our local history, disappear or fall into improper hands and become wholly lost to the parishioners. This should be remedied. There is a small apartment (in early times the "Parvise") over the southern porch, which would be suitable as a repository for our parish records. It is perfectly dry, and secure, and at a very small expense, could be made convenient as a parochial muniment room.

The following curious accounts, or inventories, of many of the church ornaments, books, and much of its property are extracted from an ancient M.S., and translated from the original Latin for

the information of the general reader. Though these accounts are of a somewhat fragmentary nature, they are interesting and valuable in connection with the history of the church,—and add much to the evidence already adduced of the connection between the church and the corporation of the city. A translation of a few of these accounts is here given, commencing with one in 1439 :—

“Delivered to William Demster and John Curtis of the goods of the church of St. Outhbert's, upon their account before William Vowell, Master of the Town of Wells, on Monday before St. Luke the Evangelist, 18 Henry VI., one gold ring, with one ‘demaunde,’ which is to remain in the chest, there to be safely kept. Also 34 silver rings, and 3 necklaces of silver gilt, with stones; one set of silver prayer beads; one set of beads of jet, with a gaude (larger head) of silver: also 5 sets of prayer beads of lamber, (amber) one of which is very much used; and all the other things of the preceding years shall be cancelled [i. e., so far as keeping in the chest was concerned] because they are put out for the use of the church, namely, 2 candlesticks of silver belonging to the altar of St. Mary, weighing 58 ounces, or thereabouts; one “paxrede” of silver gilt, inserted in wood, the gift of Agnes Pedewelle, standing at the altar of St. Mary; 2 silver gilt crowns, pertaining to the same altar of St. Mary; 28 veils, and one table cloth of Paryswerke [Paris work], the gift and legacy of John Crotres.”

“Delivered to John Steynour and John Trappe, wardens, &c., before John Godwyn, Master of the Town of Wells, on the day of St. Luke the Evangelist, in the 19th year of King Henry VI., 14 lbs. of wax, and 37 silver rings, of which 2 are of gold, with precious stones: of which rings aforesaid William Vouell has 8 silver rings in his keeping. Also 5 pairs of prayer beads of lamber (amber); one of jet, with a gaude of silver; and one pair of silver prayer beads; also 28 old veils, with 1 veil, the gift of Matilda W.; and 3 necklaces, &c. [as in first paragraph].

“At the altar of St. Mary. Delivered to Sir Henry Burgey, chaplain, one cloth of plum-colour; 3 towels; 1 keeping [or keeper] cloth of canevass; 2 cloths to hang before the altar, one of them of striped silk, and one of silk cloth, with dolphins of gold; also 3 sets of [priests'] vestments, one of which is of white cloth, and black paulde [probably net silk] used in covering the altar; one of red silk, with a golden dolphin, and having a gold veil; and one other vestment of red silk cloth, with white leaves mixed, and golden leopards on the orfrays; also one other chasuble of good and precious cloth, with gold images on the back; also 1 missal; 1 chalice, gilt within; 4 corporals, with a bag [or purse]; 1 portefory [missal for carrying about]; 2 cruetes; 1 paxbrede; 1 pewter pot; 3 finger napkins; 1 good finger napkin; 2 silver cruetes, parcel gilt; 2 towels, embroidered at the ends with bluet [blue cloth], very good; 8 pieces of silk, flame coloured; also 2 pillows of white cloth, embroidered; also one vestment of green colour, the gift of Richard Smyth, alias Kyngh; also a great chest, the gift of Margaret Dudman; 1 finger napkin, the gift of Isabel Plomer, 6½ yards long, of striped work at the ends with blood coloured thread; 1 veil of cipris [a fine cloth], the gift of Margaret Tyler; 1 table cloth, the gift of Margaret Dudman, and 1 cloth, the gift of John Hilleman.

“23 Henry VI., William Canyngton and John Sadeler, churchwardens. In the 25th Henry VI., the number of rings had increased to 54, one being of gold, ‘value 5 marks at least.’”

“At the altar of St. Mary. There were delivered to John Tyler divers ornaments for safe keeping to the use of the altar of St. Mary, in the church of St. Outhbert, for the chantry with it for ever, namely, one chasuble of white bucsyn, with alb and stole of the same; and another chasuble of red velvet, powdered with green branches; also a stole and fanor with their appurtenances; 1 other chasuble of damask cloth, of red colour, with a cross in the midst, of green colour, with its appurtenances; also another chasuble of silk rederay [cloth of red ray or stripes?], with a cloth hanging before the altar to match, with their appurtenances; 1 bag, without a corporas, of golden silk, of white colour [white silk embroidered with

gold]; 1 missal; 1 chalice, with paten, silver gilt; 2 silver cruets; 1 quire of the history of St. Cuthbert and St. Ann; all which are the gift of Thomas Tannere, Isabel his wife, and Thomas Attewode, executor of the same Isabel; also 1 corporas of gold cloth, with 1 incense boat; and an image of St. George; also 1 table cloth, 5 yards long, and one yard wide, or more, without workmanship, but striped at the end with blood coloured thread, the gift and legacy of John Halys, Burgess of Wells, 'taylor.'"

Altar of St. James. This inventory is almost wholly obliterated.

"Altar of the Holy Trinity. Four sets of vestments, one of them of gold cloth, woven with whete'urs (probably wheat ears), and another of silk cloth, striped with blue and red; another of silk cloth and redray; and another of cloth of Naples chequered with white and blue; with 2 candlesticks of silver parcel gilt; and 2 basins of silver parcel gilt; 2 silver chalices, parcel gilt; 1 good missal, with a silver gilt clasp; and another old missal; 2 silver cruets; 4 corporals, one of gold cloth; one paxbrude of tyn; also 1 towell, with a frontal of velvet, woven with gold stars; and one portefory, with [musical] notation; also another frontal, with a towell; and another towell, with a frontal of gold cloth and red; also one borde-clothe (table cloth); and one stained (or dyed) cloth for the front of the Altar; 1 other stained cloth; and one other stained cloth, with golden birds; and one other stained cloth, with an image of the Holy Trinity; also 1 other stained cloth, with scroll of the saints; also 2 curtyns of stained tarteryn (fine cloth), with golden leopards, with a frontal to match; a super-altar and curtain, also of golden cloth of red damask, woven with leopards, newly bought, namely, a frontal, and super-frontal, and a hanging cloth; also 1 cloth for the altar, with a textory at the end; towels . . . of which one is the gift of John Southover, embroidered with birds in sanguine colour; one, the gift of Sara Palgrave; and one table cloth of Zwyliwerke, containing 3 yards in length, wanting 2 inches, and one yard in breadth, the gift and legacy of John Halys, Burgess of the city aforesaid; also a set of vestments, of red damask silk, the gift of John Wherile; and 1 table cloth, the legacy of Margery Halys; also 1 cloth for . . . ; and there remains in the keeping of William Chamberleyn, £6 3s. 6d. in money. (Addition)—Also 1 stained cloth, with a figure of the Assumption of the Blessed Mary, newly made for a sub-frontal of the said altar; also 1 new pax, with the figure of the Holy Trinity, the gift of Peter Bowghyer; also 1 set of towels; also another, stained; also 2 curtains, with 3 stained cloths, with 'damaske worke' in gold and images, the gift of Sir John Wellington, the present chaplain of the Holy Trinity."

"The Holy Trinity. In the 11th year of King Henry VI., at the time of accounting in that year for the pence proceeding from the Fraternity of the Holy Trinity by the proxies 101s. vid., and 1 ring, silver gilt:—which were paid to Robert . . . Welle . . . one missal at the altar of the Holy Trinity. Also by Robert Norman, and William Chaundeler, collectors of the fraternity aforesaid, there were rendered in their year, 12s., as seen by their accounts; 22s. 2½d. are the monies remaining in the chest.

"Robert Jaye and Richard Vikere, wardens of the goods of the church, &c., delivered in the time of John Colles, Master, in the 14th year of Henry VI., 174 rings, of which 5 are of gold, of which rings 1 is broken; and as to necklaces and frontals, as in the year preceding; also 1 new towell, given by Richard Harewell, vicar of the church of St. Cuthbert, of white silk, striped with gold.

[Next year, in the time of Richard Dyere, Master of the town, the number of rings is increased to 178, and 16 necklaces, and one large necklace]; also 6 pairs of prayer beads of lamber [amber], with a crucifix, and one pair of prayer beads of silver; also 14 veils, as in the year before, with three new veils of silk; also 2 silver crosses.

"Richard Vickery and William Beanfytz, wardens, 16 Henry VI., Richard Dyere being master,—Rings increased to 181, one being of gold, with a stone. There are also added a set of prayer beads of silver; one brass pot, holding 3 gallons; and 1 veil.

"Robert Merstone, and Henry Selwode, wardens of the goods, &c., delivered at the appointed time of John Rocke, Master, in the 10th year of Henry VI., 159 rings, 4 of which are of gold. By legacy this year, there are 3 silver rings, so there are 162;

and there remains 15 great necklaces, whereof 1 is of gold. There were seven sets of prayer-beads of amber, as in the preceding year; and 3 sets of beads, by legacy this year: and afterwards there were sold in the market, at the Exchequer, to Henry Sholere, one set of prayer-beads for 6d.; and another set to John Rooke for 8d., and two pairs to Richard Hille for 14d.: And there are 20 veils remaining; and by legacy, this year, 3 veils; and there were four 4 brass pots last year, and one brass mortar, one of which was sold to Henry Witte; and this year, by legacy, there have been left 3 brass pots, and so there remain 6 pots; and afterwards there were sold 2 brass pots to Robert Tayllour, and so there remain 4 pots.

"John Mowere and Robert Merston, wardens of the church of St. Outhbert [delivered] upon the *super scaccarium* Chequer (sometimes called the Exchequer of accounts) in the time of John Rooke, Master of the Commonalty, in the 9th year of Henry VI., in rings, 134, as in the year before, of which two are of gold; and from legacies this year 8 rings, of which 1 is of gold; also 2 rings given *towards mending the cross*; and there remain 144 rings. And they answer for 4 rings given towards the *New Tower*, one of which is of gold, so there remain 150 rings; also 14 necklaces, with one small crucifix; and one silver gilt necklace, coming this year by John Mowere; and so there remain 15 necklaces, of which 1 is of gold.

"Be it remembered that Editha Colgrove, relict of Geoffrey Colgrove, gave 2 silver candlesticks weighing . . . , A.D. 1481, in the 10th year of Henry VI., in the time of John Rooke, Master. Also 2 basins, or 'pelves,' of silver, by order of John Grene, Vicar, and Thomas Sholere, of the goods of Thomas Tannere, and Isabel his wife, weighing . . . , given for the High Altar."

8th Henry VI. (among other things) records a sale upon the Exchequer, to Edward Waxmaker, 2 veils of thread, and 2 of silk, 4s. 4d.; 1 set of prayer-beads, of amber, 16d., and one pair of prayer-beads, price 16d.

"Edward Waxmaker, and John Mowere, delivered on the exchequer of account, on the feast of St. Thomas the Martyr, 6 Henry VI., in the time of John Godwyn, Master, (after enumerating articles already mentioned), 17 lbs of wax, there having been expended 21 lbs. out of 188, of the last year." "Also by legacy this year, 1 table-cloth, and 2 towels; and 1 book, the gift of Sir John Estmere."

"Edward Waxmaker, and John Mowere, delivered on the exchequer of account, on the eve of the apostles, Simon and Jude, in the time of Robert Elwalle, Master, in the 7th year of Henry VI., 119 rings, as in the year before; also by legacy this year 10 silver rings, 7 of which are gilt; in all 129 rings, 2 of which are of gold; 15 necklaces, 1 being of gold.

"John Hulet, and John Hervey, wardens of the goods at the church of St. Outhbert, on their account, on Monday next after the feast of St. Luke, the Evangelist, A.D. 1425, and in the 4th year of Henry VI., delivered in the time of John Rooke, 112 rings, of which one is of gold, with 1 good stone, called 'diamande'; and another of gold, with one stone called 'garnet'; 1 silver spoon; 3 sets of prayer-beads of amber; 1 crucifix, silver gilt; another with a knot of red silk; and a third with a knot of silver, broken; also 8 veils, of which one is of silk, 3 of Paris cloth, 2 of 'laune' (lawn), one of 'temple' (some kind of cloth), one of 'cotoun' (cotton); also three brass pots; and one silver necklace.

"Be it remembered that on the said day, the aforesaid wardens received as legacies of divers men and women, 3 brass pots; 1 brass mortar, weighing 2 owt and half; 1 pail (water vessel), with a washing basin; 1 round pail, left this year: so that there remain in the safe keeping of the wardens aforesaid, one great brass pot, received of old; also 2 brass platters, by legacy this year: 2 brass platters, received of old; 88 lbs. of wax.

"John Hervey and Edward Waxmaker delivered on their account, on Thursday before the feast of Simon and Jude, in the 5th year of Henry VI., in the time of Simon Bailly, then master of the vill of Wells, 106 rings remaining, because they had sold 1, as seen in their account, for 11d.; also by legacy, this year, 13 silver rings, being in all 119 rings; also 14 necklaces remaining, and 1 small 'broche' of silver, by legacy this year; also 7 sets or prayer beads of amber; and 1 set of beads of silver. There also remain 15 veils, and no more, because they sold, as in their account this year, 4 veils. There are also 5 veils, by legacy, this year. They answer also for 2 brass pots, and no more, because 1 was sold, as in their account this year. There

are also 2 brass pots, by legacy, this year. There also remain 1 brass mortar; and there remains 1 round pail, because they sold one this year; and there remain 4 'Matulle,' and no more, because they sold 1 this year; and there remain 38 lbs. of wax.

"Memorandum, as to the old rings remaining in the keeping of Edward Wyld and John Hulet, wardens of the church goods, in the 9th year of Henry VI., in the time of Hildebrand Elwelle, master of the borough, which wardens had delivered to them by view of the master aforesaid, and of their fellow burgesses of the town . . . rings of silver and gold, 5 of gold; there were also in their keeping, 8 necklaces of which 1 is of gold, with precious stones, with one of wrought gold thread; 1 set of prayer beads of amber, with 1 black stone, bound with . . .; 1 set of prayer beads of silver; also 10 silver rings; 3 necklaces of silver; 1 small crucifix of silver, with 2 . . .; by the good offices of Hildebrand Elwelle; also 3 veils of silk, and 2 fleeces of wool, for sale; also 2 rings, given by Alice Peke, and Matilda Cleasier; and there remain 72 rings, and other goods left by divers persons, as set forth in their account in the 1st year of Henry VI., of which 2 golden rings were delivered for 1 new incense boat, price 3s.; and 3 silver rings were also given for the same boat; also there remain on that score 67 rings.

"John Hulet and John Hoopere, wardens of the goods of the church, on their account, A.D. 1423, the 1st year of Henry VI., delivered 15 rings, 1 of which is of gold, with a stone called 'garnet,' and 5 of silver gilt, and 9 of silver; also 2 silver necklaces, and 1 set of prayer beads of 'gete,' (jet) and 3 pairs of 'lambre,' and 11 veils of silk all and singular of which remain in their keeping.

"Also John Hulet and John Herry, wardens, on their account, A.D. 1424, in the 2nd year of Henry VI., delivered 11 silver rings, of which 1 is [*sic orig.*] of gold; 1 set of prayer beads of lambour; 2 veils of silk, 1 of colour, and 1 of Paryse; 1 towel and . . .; and afterwards there were found 2 rings; and so in these three scores there remain 95 (rings), 4 of which are of gold."

"The Altar of St. John. In the first place, 4 sets of vestments, in the keeping of John Wamborg, one of 'Wardekyn,' the legacy of John Sugge, of red and white colour; 1 the gift of Agnes Forstall, of good cloth powdered; 1 of gold cloth, with 'fouredelice' (fleur de lis); 2 painted cloths, the gift of Stephen Chapman; 1 gold cloth, powdered, the gift of Master John Vy . . ., 1 towel, to match with a frontal; 3 towels for the altar; 1 cloth painted with figures, with a frontal of the same; also one frontal, powdered with gold; another frontal of fustian of Naples, of red and white colour; 1 chalice of silver and of gold, with a paten; 2 corporals, with a purse, of which 1 corporal, with a purse, with shields thereon, is in the keeping of the churchwardens; 2 'Krewettes' (crusts) of pewter; 1 portifory, with notation (for music) in the keeping of John Gunne, until he is satisfied as to 6s. 8d. [this is partially erased and altered to] of Sir William Pollard, at the altar of the Trinity; also 2 candlesticks of latten; also 1 set of vestments of green silk; 1 pair of candlesticks, latten, new.

"Memorandum as to divers goods, ornaments, and books, found in the church of St. Cuthbert, at Wells, belonging to the [high] altar, namely, in the time of John Blythe, then seneschal of the borough, on Monday next, after the feast of St. . . . the martyr, A.D. 1393. At the [high] altar. In the first place, delivered to Sir William Beryall, 1 whole suit of vestments of red ray [stripe]; 2 capes, one green, and 1 with fleurdelys. One whole suit of vestments, &c., of purple colour, except 2 albs for tunicles; one set for Sundays; 2 sets of vestments for feast days; 2 sets of vestments, one of no value, of white colour, for Lent; 3 palls, 2 of which are green, and one 'cursal' [crimson?]; 2 copes for the ruler of the choir, changed into tunicles (in a later hand); one chalice of silver and gold; 4 towels, one with a frontal; 2 finger napkins; 1 ivory pyx, for the body of Christ; 4 opening pictures (tryptychs); 2 missals, one with notation (music); 1 large portifory, with notation, the gift of John Roper; 5 gradals; 1 book of the gospels and epistles; 2 manuals; 4 psalters, one of them with the collect; another portifory, with notation; 4 antiphoners, with notation, 3 of them with psalters; 2 legends; 2 ordinals, one of them worn; 2 processional, one of them with the psalter and sacraments of the church; 1 martyrology; 1 old hymnal, with the collects; 1 book of the life of St. Cuthbert; 1 old legendary; 1 quire of the 'Pars oculi,' (probably a guide to the priesthood);

9 banners, 7 of them of silk, and 2 of linen cloth; 2 linen cloths, used for hanging before the high altar, much worn; together with 4 keepers (probably bags) for them; 2 albs, with 2 amyses, for boys; 2 corporals, with a purse for them; 2 veils cloths of silk; 2 turribles of copper; 4 'cruettes' of pewter; 2 pairs of candlesticks of pewter; 2 crosses, 1 of 'latone' (latten), and 1 of painted wood.

"Also delivered to the churchwardens on the same day, goods and ornaments pertaining to the same altar. First, 1 cross of silver gilt; 1 silver gilt chalice, given to R. Settere to make (again), because it was broken; 1 silver boat for the frankincense; 1 'coupe' (cup), of silver gilt, for the body of Christ; 2 silver gilt crowns, for the image of St. Mary, and her son; 2 silver thuribles; 2 silver 'cruettes'; 5 towels for the high altar, 2 with frontals; 5 finger napkins; 1 whole suit of vestments, of silk, of white colour, of no value; 1 set of vestments of 'felewat' (velvet), with one corporal, the gift of John Spaldynge; 1 chasuble, with tunicles of green colour; 1 alb, with an amyse: a stole and faron, with figures on cloth; a cloth cope, with gold work; a pall; 3 corporals, and 4 purses for the same; 1 cushion, covered with taffeta; 2 silk veils; 1 banner of cloth of gold, the gift of Sir Thomas Palmere; also 8 table cloths, with finger napkins, the gift of William Waye, for the soul of Thomas Waye."

"The altar of St. Mary. Delivered the same day to Sir John Nevyle, chaplain of the same, 1 silver gilt chalice; 3 sets of vestments, 1 for double feasts, 1 for Sundays, and 1 for feast days; 1 small missal; 1 new portifory; 3 cloths to hang before the altar; 4 towels, 1 with a frontal; 1 white cloth, for hanging in time of Lent; 2 finger napkins; 6 veils; 1 small ivory tablet, with Him crucified sculptured thereon; 2 pewter cruets; 1 missal, the gift of Agnes Shelbere, good and new; 2 corporals, with 2 purses.

"Also, given to the wardens, the residue of the goods belonging to the same altar. One set of vestments; 1 alb, with 1 'amys,' stole and fanor; 4 towels for the altar; 2 veils; 2 crowns, and 2 garlands, for the image of St. Mary and her son; 1 towel, with 1 silk cloth, hanging before the altar, with . . . ; 1 set of vestments of gilded cloth."

"Altar of St. Katherine. Delivered to Sir William Beryale, chaplain there, 4 sets of vestments; 2 finger napkins; 1 silver gilt chalice; 1 new manual; 2 cloths, intended for hanging before the altar; 1 old cloth, painted, with 2 keepers for them; 1 cloth, intended for the time of Lent; 1 alb; 2 amyses; and 2 cruets of pewter; also 1 book of peculiar masses (masses for peculiar occasions).

"Also delivered to the wardens, goods to the same altar belonging:—1 finger napkin, the legacy of Bartholomew Palmere; 4 veils of silk, and 2 linen veils, and another old and worn."

"Altar of the Holy Trinity. Delivered to Sir Richard Treway, chaplain there, 4 sets of vestments; 3 sets of corporals, with a purse for them; 1 silver gilt chalice; 2 manuals; 1 portifory; 4 towels for the altar, of taffata of ray [striped]; 2 finger napkins; 2 silver cruets 2 cloths hanging before the altar, one of them painted, and 1 of worn silk.

"Also delivered to the churchwardens, other goods to the same altar belonging:—2 sets of vestments; 1 silver gilt chalice; 2 towels, with 2 frontals."

"Altar of the Apostles Peter and Paul. There remain on the same day, in the keeping of Sir Stephen Lucas, chaplain there, 5 sets of vestments; 4 corporals, with a purse; 2 coffers; 6 towels for the altar, 2 of them with frontals, and 1 with a worn hanging cloth; 5 finger napkins; 3 cloths hanging before the altar, and 1 cloth hanging before the images on the altar, of which cloths, 3 are painted; 2 silver gilt chalices; 1 entire missal; 1 portifory, with notation; 10 veils."

"At the altar of St. James. Three sets of vestments; delivered to John Baker and Richard Groce, namely, 1 of sanguine silk; and another of sanguine damask; another with green stripes; 3 albs; 2 starred cloths, with 2 new keepers, with 2 curtains, with the organs; 3 towels, with 1 veil of sanguine silk; 1 silver chalice, gilt within; 1 other chalice, gilt; 2 corporals, with two purses, 1 in the keeping of the churchwardens; 1 set of cruets, of pewter; 1 coverall of canvas; 1 pyx, of wood; 1 pyx . . . ; 1 . . . finger napkin; also other towels, the gift of William Wey; of these 1 towel is wanting. [Added] In the 3rd year of King

Henry VI., also 1 corporal wanting, through Sir John Baker, lately deceased; and the said manual was delivered to Sir John Estmere; 1 worn . . . of crimson" [consecrated oil].

"At the altar of St. Katherine. 2 sets of vestments, one of cloth, the other of silk, with roses; 1 silver gilt chalice; 2 corporals, with purses; 1 good missal; 1 manual; 2 cruets of pewter."

"At the altar of St. Michael. One missal, formerly belonging to the great altar, delivered to the churchwarden, Richard Groos; 1 set of vestments of white colour; 1 set of vestments of green ray (stripe); 1 chalice, silver gilt; . . . frontal, with a purse; 1 finger napkin; 1 opening picture (tryptych); 2 towels for the altar, striped; 2 starred cloths, with 2 . . . ; 1 white cloth for Lent; 1 manual; of which delivery was made to Sir Robert . . . These things were viewed in the time of Henry Maundewere, Master (Mayor)."

"Memorandum, as to divers goods, ornaments, and books, found in the church of St. Cuthbert, Wells, pertaining to divers altars in the church aforesaid, in the time of Richard Groos, Master of the borough of Wells, on Tuesday, the feast of St. Leonard, A. D. 1403, in the 5th year of Henry IV. In the first place, delivered to William Don and John Samelle, clerk of the same church, 1 set of vestments entire, of red ray, with 1 cope, the gift of John Spalding [vicar] for Sundays; 1 set of vestments, entire, of green ray, in the hands of the wardens, for feasts, not double feasts; 1 set of black vestments, for ferial days, except 2 albs; 2 green palls, worn out; a chalice, with paten, silver gilt; 3 green towels, 1 with 1 frontal; 1 painted linen cloth, the gift of Master Thomas Frome vicar; 2 finger napkins, 1 for the altar, and 1 for the front; 1 wooden pyx, covered with cloth, in one cage of black leather, delivered to the vicar for placing therein the body of Christ; 1 opening picture (tryptych); 1 silver spoon; 1 missal, with notation; 1 book called Bartholomew, on cases of conscience, the gift of Master Thomas Viben; 1 cup for the body of Christ, made of latten; 1 great portifory, the gift of John Ropere; 1 missal, the gift of Thomas Frome, vicar there; 1 small portifory; 2 antiphonars, 1 with a psalter; 3 psalters, 1 with a hymnal; 1 collectary, with a psalter and hymnal; 1 gradal; 1 legendary; 1 ordinal; 1 stayned cloth, the gift of Stephen Chapman; another stayned cloth, the gift of the vicar; and another linen cloth to cover the Agnus Dei; 3 corporals, with purses; 2 cruets of pewter; 2 pairs of candlesticks, of latten; 2 wooden crosses, defective; 2 gradals, newly acquired; 4 processions, lately given; 1 old processional, in the hands of Walter Clerk and John Glasyere; 2 books, for burial of the bodies of the dead, the gift of John Alampstone; 1 martyrology; 1 epistolar; 1 cloth for the sepulchre ['watching the sepulchre,' on Good Friday], stained anew; 1 manual, with notation, the gift of John Atte Welle, chaplain; 1 cross, silver gilt, and lately given; 1 christmatory of silver parcel gilt, with a case of black leather, bound with iron; 1 pyx of gold, for the body of Christ, hanging over the altar; a little pyx."

"Altar of the Holy Trinity. There remain there in the keeping of Sir John Baker, 2 sets of vestments, 1 of them with trimmings of white and sanguine chequered, for ferial days; and 1 with red stripes for Sundays; and 1 other of red color, with gold, and 1 purse, with a frontal with red stripes; 1 missal and 1 portifory; 2 towels for the altar; 1 finger napkin; 1 silver gilt chalice; 2 corporals, with a purse; 1 purse, with a corporal, the gift of John Werrox; 1 small opening picture, with the image of Him crucified; 2 cruets of tin; 1 cloth hanging before the altar, of stained linen; 1 cloth of carde, for covering the altar; 1 cloth stained anew, with the image of Him crucified; 1 cloth for Lent; 2 cloths for . . . ; 1 set of vestments, the gift of Richard Barbe, with orfrays and black crowns, and stars of gold, for the greater double feasts; 1 set of vestments, with red stripes; 2 towels, one with a frontal, 1 with a red striped cloth; 2 cruets of silver, the cover of one wanting; 2 stained cloths, with 2 keepers, delivered by John Blythe; 4 towels, 2 with frontals, and two of . . . cloth; 1 finger napkin, and one of sanguine silk, painted."

"Altar of St. Catherine. There remain there in the keeping of Sir John Welyngtone, 1 pair of cloths of gold and silver, with 'cusyns' (onshions), 1 of white color, for ferial days, and another of sanguine called 'Pecoc blew,' 1 with a border of cloth of gold, for Sundays; and one of red and green cloth, for mid-Lent; 1 small

missal; 1 chalice with paten of silver gilt; 1 corporal, with a purse; 1 opening picture, with an image of St. Katherine of painted glass, somewhat broken; 3 towels for the altar; 1 cloth hanging before the altar, painted; 1 'cloth of cards' to cover the altar; 2 cruets of pewter; 1 finger napkin; 1 chalice of silver, parcel gilt, in the charge of Thomas Whityng; 1 frontal, the gift of Richard Settere, without a towel; 1 cloth with fleurdelis; and one portifery, noted,—all of which are in the keeping of Sir W. Puns."

"Altar of St. Mary. There remain there in the keeping of Sir Richard Mey, 2 sets of vestments, 1 of white colour, with roses in gold, for ferial days; and 1 of silver cloth, with a gilt border, for Sundays; and 1 other red, with 'dolfyns' in gold; 1 small missal; 1 portifery; 1 silver gilt chalice, with paten; 1 corporal, with a purse; 8 towels, 1 with a frontal; 1 finger napkin; 1 small picture, with an image of Him crucified, on one side; and that of St. Mary on the other; also 2 opening pictures of glass, one of them broken, and 2 cruets of pewter; also a small curtain for the picture over the altar, such curtain being of linen cloth, white and sanguine colour; 1 'canevas' beneath it; 1 towell, and 1 cloth of cards to cover the altar; 1 portefory, with notation, not bound; 1 missal, the legacy of Agnes Shether; 1 cloth made of crosses (crosses all over it) for the altar, beneath the towel."

"Altar of the Apostles Peter and Paul. There remain there, in the charge of Sir Stephen Lucas, 2 sets of vestments, one with green stripes, and one of cloth of gold; and another of red cloth, covered with 'dolfynes,' the third set in the charge of Sir Thomas Whityng; 1 portifery, with notation; 2 silver chalices; 8 veils; 3 painted cloths hanging before the altar; 1 opening picture; 2 cruets of pewter; 2 new stained cloths hanging before the altar; 1 portifery, with notation. [Added] Of the aforesaid towels, 2 are lost; also a 'coffre' of red, with 'shaildes' painted thereon.

"There remain in the hands of Sir John Bonbergh and Walter Clerke, wardens of the goods of the church fabric, 1 cross of silver gilt; 2 cups of silver gilt (one smaller and the other larger), for holding the body of Christ; 1 chalice, silver gilt, for the greater double feasts, in a case of osier; 2 silver thuribles of copper gilt, of wondrous work, with chains of silver; 1 ivory pyx, bound with silver, for the body of Christ; 4 silver cruets, 2 round, and 2 square; 2 cushions of gold cloth; 1 chasuble; 3 albs, with an amice, with a border of cloth of gold, and stoles and fanon with 8 copes to match, bought of the executors of the Rev'd Father, Sir Ralph de Ergum, late Bishop of Bath and Wells; also 1 entire suit of red cloth of gold, the gift of Thomas Tannere, late burgess of Wells; 1 chasuble, and alb, with amice, stole, and fanon, and borders thereto; and 2 palls, of which 1 is of red and green, and 1 of gold cloth, the gift of John Spaldyng, late vicar of the Church of St. Cuthbert at Wells; also 2 corporals of cloth of gold, made by Richard Settere; 2 palls of red cloth of gold, doubled with 'canevas'; 2 red striped curtains, for the great altar, bought of the executors of the aforesaid Sir Ralph, the Bishop; 1 chasuble of red gold cloth, and one alb, with amice, stole, and fanon, with . . . borders of cloth of gold, the gift of Thomas Mount, late canon of the church of Wells; 1 alb with amice, stole and fanon, with a border of red cloth and images of gold; 1 suit of vestments entire, except the cope, of white striped silk cloth; 1 set of vestments, the gift of John Gunthorpe, made of a new gown of the same John, his legacy; 2 turrices of purple colored satyn; 2 other sets of vestments, of which one with its borders is of red stripe; 2 sets of white vestments, 1 'tartaryn,' and 1 fustian; 1 set of vestments, the gift of Richard Barbe, black crowns, gold and stars; also one set of vestments of red striped cloth, pertaining to the altar of the Holy Trinity; 1 towel for the altar of St. Mary, with one frontal of red, and lions of gold; 1 towel with a towel hanging to the ground, the gift of John Carleton; 2 towels for the altar of St. Catherine, one with a frontal, 1 towel, with a frontal, for the great altar, of the colour of Jude [indigo colour] striped; 6 towels for the altar, 1 with a frontal, and 6 finger napkins; 1 chausuble, and one alb, with an amice of white, with two turrices of green silk cloth; 2 red banners, with the image of St. Mary in silver upon them; 2 banners powdered with gold; 9 banners, 8 of them of silk, and a small one of gold cloth, for a cross; 2 banners of 'steyned' (dyed) cloth, and 1 for the cross in the time of Lent; 1 red banner, with figures of St. Andrew on the one side, and St. James on the other; 2 old palls; 2 crowns,



silver gilt, with 'Peter' impressed thereon, for the image of the beloved Mary and her son, at the Great Altar ; 2 crowns silver gilt, with 'Peter' impressed thereon, for the images of the blessed Mary and her son, at her own altar in the same church ; 1 old missal ; 3 Antiphonars ; 3 gradals ; 2 Secondaries ; 2 Processionals ; 1 old Ordinal ; 1 Martyrology ; 1 quire of blank . . . ; and one small book of the life of St. Cuthbert ; and 1 psalter, of the gift of Robert Bakere ; 1 new gradal bought, the goods of the church ; and 1 new gradal the gift of Henry Sparkeford.

"Be it remembered that on Monday next before the feast of St. Luke the Evangelist, at the time of the account of John Blythe, Master, 8th Henry VI., in the charge of Robert Bakere and John Glaswere, wardens of the goods, &c., in the year aforesaid, First, 1 necklace of gold, with precious stones ; 1 small necklace of silver gilt ; 17 rings fixed on one black cloth ; 1 pouch of woven gold cloth ; 1 great necklace of silver gilt, with one ring silver gilt ; 2 pieces, and one folet of 'Cipris Kerchefts,' 3 table cloths, and 2 towels ; 1 half piece of a veil of cipris, [probably a very fine cloth].

"Be it remembered that on Tuesday next before the feast of St. Kalictus the Pope, 11th Henry IV., John Wycombe then being Master of the Commonalty, divers jewels, with certain veils were delivered to John Glaswere and Edward Wylde, wardens of the goods of the Church of St. Cuthbert : First, 1 pouch, woven with gold, with a great necklace of silver gilt, and a ring, silver gilt, to the same pouch annexed, and adorned with precious stones ; 1 small silver necklace ; another silver necklace ; 26 rings, 3 of them of gold ; 5 and a half pieces of veils of silk ; 14 volets of silk, and 1 veil from parts beyond the sea ; 1 table cloth, by legacy from John Knyghte ; 6 folletes of silk, the gift of Thomas Tannere ; 3 veils of silk, and 1 of Shaftesbury [probably fine cloth made there] to be sold ; 1 set of prayer beads, of amber ; 2 table cloths, and 3 finger napkins, new this year ; 4 brass pots weighing 146 pounds. John Glaswere was admitted to charge of the goods of the church, E. Wylde for the gate, [*porta*] has in his keeping 91 pounds of lead, and Agnes Groos 36 lbs. of lead, delivered by Thomas Sholer ; also 1 brass pot, containing 3 parts of a gallon ; . . . veils of silk . . . the legacy of Raynode of Cogeslegh ; prayerbeads of amber."

Not one of the articles enumerated in the foregoing inventories is now known to exist.





## Value of the Vicarage, &c.

**A** COMPARISON of the past and present value of ecclesiastical preferments and property, presents many interesting facts, and gives much curious and valuable information to the historian and the antiquary, as well as to others who read and reflect on such subjects.

The income of the vicar, arising from tythes, appears by the capitular records to have been defined and settled at a very early date. In 1239 Peter de Cicestre, Dean, and the Chapter, on the 1st of April, settled upon Robert Gyffard, then vicar, that portion of the tythes which the vicars have enjoyed down to a comparatively recent period, such concession being made subject to a pension of 20 marks (£13 6s. 8d.) hereafter noticed.

In the year 1288, Pope Nicholas IV., ordered a survey and valuation of the churches in England, and by this valuation all the taxes, both temporal and spiritual, were regulated until the survey ordered by Henry VIII., in the 26th year of his reign. This survey of Pope Nicholas was completed, as to the province of Canterbury, in 1291, and as to that of York, in the following year. The Rectory of St. Cuthbert is returned as of the yearly value of ten marks, or £6 13s. 4d. In the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of Henry VIII., (A.D. 1535) Richard Clarkson being then vicar, the gross value of the vicarage is set down at £67 13s. 6d., out of which were paid, "A pension to the Dean and Chapter, £13 6s. 8d.; a pension to the Choristers, £20; a pension to a Vicar Choral, 13s. 4d.; total, £34 0s. 0d.; leaving as the net yearly value, £33 13s. 6d.

The Registers of the Dean and Chapter state that the above £13 6s. 8d. (or 20 marks) were really paid out of the tithes of the Hamlets of Chilcote, Priddy, and Whitnell, in the following sums :—

At Christmas, £2 6s. 8d. ; Easter, £2 6s. 8d. ; Lammas, £3 6s. 8d. ; Nativity of the B. V. M. ; £3 6s. 8d. ; St. John Baptist, £2.

The pension of 13s. 4d., in the early accounts of the Dean and Chapter, and up to within 100 years, is said to be for the " Vicarial House." Its origin will be shown in my notice of the " Vicarage House."

The pension of £20 a year to the choristers was granted by Richard Harewell, Vicar of St. Cuthbert's, and confirmed by a charter of John Harewell, Bishop of Bath and Wells, dated at Wells, 18th September, in the 10th year of his consecration (A.D. 1367). This charter is addressed to all the sons of Holy Mother Church, with health in the embraces of the Saviour. It recites and confirms a gift of the annual rent of £20 from himself (the donor) and his successors, to John Forest, then Dean of Wells, and the Chapter, and their successors; and it is stated that the money was given for the use, advantage, and maintenance of the choristers of the Cathedral Church, for the increase of divine worship, and the health of the soul of the said Richard Harewell; and the payment was to be made annually in equal portions, at the four principal terms in the year.

In the survey made by order of Edward VI. (A.D. 1547), the following particulars of the Rectory and Vicarage of St. Cuthbert occur :—

"The p'sonage ther is worthe yerely xxxiiij. xiiij. iiij. wherof Roger Edgeworthe, Clerke, Doct'r of Divinitie, is now Inou'bent, who findeth one Prieste, or curate vnder hym to mynyster ther."

In or about 1662, the Rev. Charles Thirlby became vicar, and subsequently obtained the Archdeaconry of Bath. Sometime after his appointment as vicar, he presented the following petition to the Archbishop of Canterbury, which shows the net value of the vicarage at that time :—

"To the Most Reverend Father in God, Gilbert, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. The humble petition of Charles Thirlby, Clerke, Master of Artes, Vicar of St. Cuthbert's, in Wells, humbly sheweth :

"Wheras yo'r p'titioner is possessed of ye Vicaridge of St. Cuthbert's in Wells, of a high valuation in the king's bookes, namely, £33 13s. 0d., w'ch yet doth not yield to y'r p'titioner, in the yearely income, above thirty pounds clearly p'r ann., there being to be paid out of the s'd Vicaridge the sume of £35 to ye Deane and Chapter of the Cathedrall Church of Wells, for the maintenance of ye choristers of ye said church, and other vses, so that the said Vicaridge is not able to maintaine

yo'r said p'titioner w'thout some other p'ferment in the church, w'ch the Lord Bishop of Bathe and Wells, takinge into his charitable consideration, hath bestowed vpon y'or p'titioner the Vicaridge of East Brent, in ye said county and diocese, distant from Wells not above fourteene miles.

"May it therefore please y'or Grace to grant yo'r p'titioner a dispensation to hold the said two benefices. And y'or p'titioner shall always pray," &c.

In 1746 a decree was made by the Court of Chancery for payment by the Dean and Chapter of an annual sum of thirteen marks, or £8 13s. 4d., towards the relief of the poor of the In-parish of St. Cuthbert, the liability to such payment having been disputed. In the proceedings connected with that decree, the Rectory of St. Cuthbert was set down on oath as of the yearly value of £300.

In the year 1839 the tythes of the whole of the In and Out-parishes of St. Cuthbert, were commuted for perpetual rent-charges, the gross annual amounts of which were:—for the Rectorial tythes, £1030; Vicarial, £800.

In 1853 the Dean and Chapter were requested by the Archbishop of Canterbury to answer certain questions sent by him to this (as well as other) cathedral authorities. In reply, the Dean and Chapter stated that they were the impropriate rectors of St. Cuthbert, the value of the Rectory being £1030 per annum, with glebe of the yearly value of £10; that the Vicarage of St. Cuthbert's was the only parish in the city of Wells in the patronage of the Chapter, and that the value of the cure was £828 gross, and £433 net. They also stated that there was a "good and substantial house near the church of St. Cuthbert."

The representation made by the Dean and Chapter in 1853, as to the net value of the vicarage, I find by enquiry to be very nearly applicable to the present time. The deductions for payments to the Incumbents of the district churches, and other necessary charges, leave as the net income of the vicar, about one half of the gross income of the vicarage.

In the year 1633 disputes arose in connection with the levying of rates on the inhabitants for raising the odious tax known as "Ship Money." These differences the Privy Council referred to the then Bishop (Dr. Piers) and two Justices of the Peace, who made their report on the 25th April, 1638. The chief cause of complaint was that the citizens were assessed unequally in comparison with their neighbours of the Hundred of Wells Forum. The case, as stated by the citizens, give many curious particulars

of the state of the city at that time. They alleged that the permanent yearly income of the corporation was only about £70, and that the public charges they had to bear were,—

“The Mayor's salary (besides £70 per ann., spent by him in the bearing up of the credit of the place), £30 Os. Od.; fees to counsel, and other officers of the corporation, £20 Os. Od.; the charge in respect of taking the ann'l account, £8 Os. Od.; for a chaplain to say prayers in aid of the vicar of St. Cuthbert, £7 Os. Od.; the average charge for repairing Bubwith's Hospital, £8 Os. Od.; the like for repairing the conduit, £2 Os. Od.; the maintenance of the arms and armour of the city, £3 Os. Od.”

And besides these charges, the city magistrates were obliged to maintain the town gaol for “punishing delinquents.” In the borough it was further alleged, there were four verderies, or tythings, in which were 368 messuages, houses, and cottages, and 5 mills, and the area is estimated at 320 acres. The assessment to public subsidies was £75 in land, and £140 in goods, “the residewe beinge verie vnable to pay.” Poor persons “not able to live but by reliefe,” are said to be “not soe fewe as 300 men, women, and children,” and no inhabitant whose property lay within the city, was “of ability to be taxed above £xx.” The borough was charged with the maintenance of 47 “armors,” and “the lib'tie of ye church” with two, whereas there were within “ye whole hundred, w'th those 49, but clx;” the proper proportion for “the Burrowe and ye church” being only 40, viz., the former 32 and the latter 8. The petitioners prayed “that the constables and some other substantial and sufficient men of the Forum” might be examined, “and to show cause wherefore ye inhabitants w'thin ye Burrowe and ye Lib'tie of ye church should not be equallie and p'porconable rated w'th ye Forum; and whie yt p'te of ye p'sh of St. Cuthbert w'ch is in ye Burrowe should not be equallie and p'porconably rated w'th ye p'te of ye p'sh w'ch is w'thout ye Burrowe.”

The report of the Bishop and his assistants was to the following effect :—

“First, that ye Lib'tie of ye Cathedral Church of Wells is w'thin the citty of Wells, but not w'thin ye corporacon of ye maior and burgesses of ye citty of Wells, and yt it is noe p'te or member of ye same, neither subordinate to ye rule theareof; and that it alwaies hath beene, and is, an exempte jurisdiction of itselfe.”

“2. Secondlie, The inhabitants of ye hundred of Wells Forum are not overcharged in ye rate imposed vppon them for ye Shippmoney; and soe in that respect they have noe just cause to complayne.”

"3. Thirdlie, That ye paymt. of ye . . . assessed vpon ye s'd cittie liethe for the moste p'te vpon ye shoppekeepers, and handicraftesmen, and therefore in our opinions wee conceave it verry reasonable and fitt that ye inhabitants w'thin ye libtie should joyne in paym't of ye shipp money w'th ye said cittie for ye ease of ye same. All w'ch we humbly submitt unto yo'r Lo'pp's wisdomes.

" Wells, 25th Aprill, 1638.—(signed)

" Guill. Bath and Wellen.

" Paull Godwyn.

" William Walrond."

The report having been presented to the Privy Council, was ordered to be confirmed.

At the present time the houses and lands in the In-parish of St. Cuthbert are assessed, for the purposes of public rates, &c., at nearly eleven thousand pounds per annum, and this sum is, of course, considerably below the real value.





## The Church Registers.

**T**HE present mode of preserving written memorials of births, deaths, and marriages, was instituted in 1538 by the once celebrated Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, Prime Minister to Henry VII., who was made Dean of Wells in 1537, and lost his head on the scaffold in 1540. The earliest register connected with the church of St. Cuthbert begins in 1608. The first baptism recorded in it is—"1608, Marche. Ann, the daughter of Thomas Stratton;" the first marriage—"1609, Aprill. Morgan Morgan, and Ann Frie;" and the first burial, "1608, Marche. Mr. Leonard Crosse." It is a singular fact that this Leonard Crosse was the principal person by whose exertions the charter granted by Queen Elizabeth was obtained. He was Mayor of Wells in 1587, 1599, and 1607, and he was also elected as one of the Members of Parliament for the city, in 1597.

In examining these volumes we see writing of various characters, written by many different hands. Here we find the only existing memorials of thousands who once trod our streets, and worshipped in our parish church. Where and what are they now? Old and young, rich and poor,—all are gone to their account! But for these frail notices not a trace of them would be left! No distinction of character or station is now recognised, "for who can analyse the dust of the churchyard and distinguish the dead"? On this subject a local author has written,— "Here are their names, and the dates of their respective baptisms, marriages, or burials,—and that is all! There was joy at their births; there was hilarity at their weddings; there were tears shed upon their

graves: the history of their lives was as interesting to them as ours can be to us: but all is now forgotten."

The earlier registers contain many curious entries. Among the records of the "weddings" in 1609 is "a nuptial affair between John Barns and Widow Cloud." Among the "burialls," in June, 1612, "Henry Tayler, a grovier, stified in a groffe at Mendip, the 13th."

During the great rebellion many persons were buried of whose interment no record was made. The following entries (among others) occur, the first being that of a burial *in the cathedral*: "Mr. Thomas Lydes, sonne of Sir John Lydes, in the comptie of Sussex, was slayne at Evercritch, and buried in St. Andrew's church, neare Bishop Lake's grave, in the south ile of the quire, upon Whit Tuesday, June 11th, 1644." "Christopher Daniell, the son of Edward and Marie Daniell, of the parish of Warminster, in Wiltshire, who was tried heere by a Counsell of Warre, and found guiltie of bearing of armes divers times against King Charles, and soe was condem'd, executed, and buried, Aprill 10th, 1645." "Gray Holliner Gorren, an Irishman, was slaine in Dulcot. Buried, May 15th, 1645." "Captayne John Morley, son of Sir John Morley, Maior and Governor of Newcastle, in the county of Northumberland, was buried, Aprill 22nd, 1645." "John Hance, a Trumpetter, a Duchman, was slayne in this cittie with a pistol. Was buried, July 19th, 1645."

If we peruse the earlier registers, and compare them with those of modern dates, we may thus learn a true lesson of the frailty of our own nature. The first register will give scarcely a name which is now known among us. Families have come and settled here, acquired wealth and local distinction, or perhaps become disappointed in their aspirations, then deserted the place, or from some other cause have disappeared, and their names have become extinct and forgotten. Where shall we now find the names of Welleslegh, Welles, Stourton, Banastre, Towker, Bowedyche, Cristesham, Blythe, Elwelle, Compton, Atte-Wode, Atte-Water, Tanner, Wycombe, Wyllyams, Vowell, Rocke, Colston, Godwyn, Baron, Sadeler, Burnell, Maudeley, Bowerman, Trappe, Ayshe, Dyere, Gascoyne, Cutte, Poulett, Towse, Llewellyn, Ayleworth, Leigh, Crosse, Watkyns, Bull, Whitynge, Bricke, Coward, Walrond, Harper, Worrall, Cordwent, Mattocke, Strode, and hundreds of other once eminent citizens of Wells?



If curiosity leads us to peruse the Registers, we shall find affecting records of burials of many who fell victims to the plague. The first entry that occurs, having reference to this awful pestilence, is as follows:—"Jane, the wife of Richard Daus, the first that dyed of the sickness, was bur. Aug. 2, 1645." Many were interred in the open fields, having been driven beyond the city boundaries when they or their friends became affected with the distemper. A record of one of these interments is thus made:—"Elizabeth, Daug. of Robert Somerton, and Ann his wife, was buried in a Meade at Chelcot, Septem. 18th, 1645." Day after day, for several months, four or five, and sometimes more, were carried to the churchyard. Nearly all who could afford to provide means of living elsewhere deserted the city, and many encamped on Tor Hill, and in other places in the neighbourhood.

The pestilence has visited Wells on several occasions, and thus hundreds were added to the tenants of the churchyard, the numbers being too great for any regular record to be kept of their interment. In 1591, the scourge broke out at Taunton, and the corporation then ordered that no "In-keeper, Typpler, or other inhabitant" should receive any person, or any merchandise, or goods coming from Taunton, "where the sicknesse, or plague," then prevailed. In the following year this city had become affected, and numbers of the more wealthy and influential inhabitants left their houses. The corporation, in the month of July, ordered that all such should "make theyre repayre home into the towne, at or before the eight daye of August," or pay such sums as were "assessed and taxed vppon theym towards the reliefe of the sicke people in Welles;" and those who failed in complying with this order, were to forfeit the "lib'ties and privileges" of the city. The plague continued, and another order was made in October, 1592, that all the burgesses then "inhabitynge and dwellinge in the countrie" should "repayre home and inhabit and dwell in theyre owne houses within the saide cittie or borough." This order also required that no person whose house was "infected with the sicknesse or plague" should go out of his house, on pain of imprisonment, and to give sureties for his good behaviour; also "to sette vpp a red crosse vppon the doors of all suche p'sons as their howses have ben infected at anye tyme sithence the xiiij of September last." "Alsoe

hit is agreed that Stephen Hurman shalbe the beadle of the towne, and shall have a newe cote, and ijs. a wyke duryng the tyme of ij moneths." "Alsoe that all suche p'sons as shall goe owt of theire howses after suche tyme as the crosse shalbe sette vpon theire dore, vnlesse they shalbe licensed soe to doe, shalbe comytted to ward, and the stockes shalbe sette at the end of John Hiscoxe shoppe."

In the first year of James I. (A.D. 1603.) the plague was depopulating London and other places. This induced the Wells corporation to prohibit all communication with Bristol, where the pestilence was then raging, on pain of imprisonment and fine. Mr. William Bull, one of the magistrates of the city, having "receyved from London, being a place notoriouslie infected with the sicknesse of the plague, threë horse packes of wares," was fined £40. Robert Hill, who had "receyved from Arthur Whittyng, of Shepton Mallet, carrier," three dozen of flax, which had been brought from London, was also fined £10. At length, notwithstanding the precautions taken, the plague extended itself to Wells, and the houses of John Harte and Walter Clynes, in Tucker Street, being suspected, it was agreed by the corporation that "the saied ij howses, front and back," should be watched night and day. From Tucker Street the pestilence spread to other parts of the city, and at length it was determined to purchase a meadow called Swanyngnam, and thereon a "pest-house" was erected, to which those stricken with the plague were removed.

In 1625, the inhabitants were alarmed at various reports that persons had come here from London, where the plague then prevailed. The utmost precautions were adopted to prevent its introduction here, and it was "ordered that the constables, together w'th the verderers, shall forthwith goe and take order for the riddinge and avoydinge of the carryer, together w'th his packes, w'ch ar nowe at Portelmes owte of the p'cinct of the burrow into the tythinge of Burcott." All the fairs were suspended, and notices for that purpose were sent to the towns and villages in the west of England.

There is a tradition that during one of these terrible visitations a place of interment for the dead was made in the cathedral green, where (it is said) the remains of upwards of two hundred human beings were buried in one pit.

In the year 1854, the then parish clerk, Mr. Thomas Lovell, gave me the following statistics, compiled by him from the church registers. His father, Mr. John Lovell, was elected as clerk, 21st April, 1773, and died 23rd June, 1835, in the 90th year of his age. During that period there were marriages, 2602; baptisms, 9313; burials, 6008. And from the 23rd of June, 1835, to the 30th December, 1854, there were marriages, 596; baptisms, 3,199; burials, 2,382.

During the time Mr. John Willmott held the office of churchwarden he carefully brought together and examined the whole of the registers and other books belonging to the church, and, so that coming generations may know exactly what the authorised custodians of these interesting records ought to be made accountable for, he inserted a list or inventory of the books at the end of the parish vestry book, a copy of which is here given:—

A LIST OF THE REGISTERS IN ST. CUTHBERT'S CHURCH, WELLS,  
TAKEN JANUARY, 1856.

1.—Baptisms, Weddings, and Burials, ... ..	1608—1667	11.—Marriages ... ..	1813—1833
2.— do. do. do. ... ..	68—1727	12.—Baptisms ... ..	13— 26
3.— do. do. do. ... ..	1727— 39	13.—Burials ... ..	13— 35
4.—Baptisms and Burials, ... ..	40— 87	14.—Marriages ... ..	33— 37
—Marriages, ... ..	40— 54	15.—Banns ... ..	June 22 Dec 34
5.—Baptisms and Burials, ... ..	88—1812	16.—Baptisms ... ..	26— 33
6.—Banns and Marriages, ... ..	54—1763	17.—Marriages ... ..	July 37 Nov 53
7.— do. do. do. ... ..	63— 78	18.—Burials from Sept. 1835 to the closing of the Church and Churchyard as places of Burial, Sept. 30th, 1855.	
8.— do. do. do. ... ..	78— 85	19.—Banns 1834, (now in use).	
9.— do. do. do. ... ..	85— 99	20.—Baptisms 1839 (do.)	
10.—Banns ... ..	99—1821	21.—Marriages Nov. 1835, (do.)	
—Marriages ... ..	99— 12		

It is much to be regretted that the praiseworthy example thus set by Mr. Willmott is not more frequently followed. The law, as it stands at present, requires amendment, so that those who have the custody of parochial and such-like records may be made responsible, under heavy penalties, for the safe keeping of such important muniments.





## The Rectory, Vicarage House, Vicars, &c.

**F**ROM a very early period the Rectory and "great tythes" were granted by the Dean and Chapter on leases for lives, the lessee paying a fine on each renewal, and a yearly sum as Lord's rent. The following are notes from a lease granted in 1800, to Alexander Popham, Esq., then one of the Masters of the Court of Chancery. By this lease the Dean and Chapter demised "all that the rectory and parsonage of the parish and parish church of St. Cuthbert, in Wells, and also the barn called the Canon barn, and two courts or yards to the said barn adjoining and belonging, all standing or being in and near Wells; and also all the tythes of corn, grain, hay, of mills, and other tythe sand also all other the profits of the said rectory or parsonage;" except all "courts and perquisites of courts, fines of lands, heriots, reliefs, escheats, marriages, pensions, rents, lands, meadows, pastures, mines, rents of corn, and oats, and the prison, and the house appointed and used for the same, and the pound to the said barn adjoining," with power to use the prison, and to keep and hold courts in the said barn for the tenants there to do suit and service; and also except the "advowson of the vicarage and parish Church of St. Cuthbert," and the presentation thereof when vacant. Another lease was subsequently granted, which is now determinable with the life of one very old person. The lessee is Sir Charles Taylor, Bart. The reversion of the Rectory on the determination of the lease, will go to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, as part of the estates and

possessions of the Dean and Chapter. On that event happening, which cannot be very distant, the Commissioners will become possessed of the rectorial tythe rent-charge, amounting to £1050 per annum, from which it is hoped that some local benefits will be derived, either directly or indirectly, by the inhabitants of Wells.

### THE VICARAGE HOUSE.

In the early records relating to St. Cuthbert's Church, there are frequent notices of a house belonging to the vicar, situate in Chamberlain Street, and another in St. Cuthbert Street. The former has ceased to be held by the vicars for a very long period, and I cannot identify it with any existing building. There was a very ancient payment or pension of 16d. made by the vicar in respect of this house. The smallness of the sum is a sure proof of the antiquity of its origin. This pension was designed for the support of an anniversary in the church of St. Cuthbert. It is noticed in the charters of Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth, extracts from both of which are given in another part of the present work.

The present Vicarage House, or rather the site of it, has been in the possession of the vicars for the time being upwards of six hundred years. By a charter, or grant, dated 29th December, 1262, Richard de Bamfield, canon of Wells, gave his house, described as "over against St. Cuthbert's church," to the vicar of St. Cuthbert for ever, subject to a yearly pension of one mark (13s. 4d.), to the Dean and Chapter of Wells on the anniversary of his obit, which was celebrated at the altar of St. Edmund, the Confessor, in the nave of the Cathedral. This Richard de Bamfield's residence was in New-street. He was not only a benefactor to the vicarage of St. Cuthbert, but also to the Cathedral Church. Before his death he gave to the Dean and Chapter, lands in Wookey, Wells, and Dulcote, besides divers rents or pensions, including the one mark reserved in the grant of the Vicarage House above noticed.

On the 10th December, 1544, the Dean and Chapter collated John Lambert, vicar choral, to the chantry "*ad altare Sancti Edmundi Episcopi et Confessoris in navi Ecclesiæ, pro anima Richardi Bamfylde.*"

The payments out of the lands given to the Dean and Chapter were :—

	£	s.	d.
To the Bishop for the Donor's house in New Street ... ..	0	0	4
Two Priest Vicars celebrating for the souls of Bishop William Button, the first, William, Provost of Comb, and his (the Donor's) own, at the Altar of St. Edmund, in the nave of the church, near which he desired to be buried ... ..	2	10	0
Two Tapers ... ..	0	3	4
Two hundred poor, at an half-penny a piece yearly ... ..	0	8	4
On Oct. 5th, St. Faith's day, on his obit ... ..	0	1	8
Twenty poor persons, ashamed to beg ... ..	0	1	8
To the Communer and two Vicars distributing the same ... ..	0	1	0
To the Canons, &c., on his obit ... ..	0	10	0
For a taper burning at the second matins every night before the Cross in the nave of the church ... ..	0	6	0
A taper at the Shrines ... ..	0	4	0
Sacrist, 6d.—Subsacrist, 2d. ... ..	0	0	8

The Vicarage house is occasionally noticed in the city records, and can easily be identified with the present house, an instance of which is found in an original deed dated 1320, of which the following is a translation :—

"To ALL to whom this present writing shall be seen or heard, WALTER DE BRISTLETON, Chaplain, JOHN AT CHURCHSTYLE, of Wells, and HUGH LE BARBUR, Executors of the Testament of William of Schepton, deceased, late of the borough of Wells, everlasting greeting in the Lord. WHEREAS according to the custom of the borough of Wells hitherto observed and approved, it is lawful for any burgess of the aforesaid borough to bequeath by his testament and last will, as well any tenement which he had purchased, as his chattels; and the aforesaid William of Schepton had purchased one tenement with its appurtenances, in Wells aforesaid, situate in the street which is called S. Cuthbert's Street, in fee simple: Which said tenement is situate between a tenement of the perpetual vicar of the church of St. Cuthbert on the west side, and a tenement of the late William Collard on the east side; and he bequeathed the said tenement with the appurtenances by his testament and last will according to the aforesaid custom of the said borough to us to sell. We the said Walter de Bristleton, John at Churchstyle, and Hugh le Barbur, executors of the will of the aforesaid William of Schepton, according to his last will, in the capacity of his executors, for a certain sum of money to us in hand paid, have granted, sold, and delivered the said tenement with all the appurtenances thereto to Robert Fenel and Juliana his wife, and the heirs of their bodies, and have confirmed the same by this present writing: To HAVE AND HOLD all the aforesaid tenement, with all the appurtenances thereto, to the same Robert and Juliana, and the heirs of their bodies, and their assigns for ever, of the chief lord of the fee, by the services therefor due and accustomed. IN WITNESS whereof we have affixed our seals to this present writing [in the presence of] these witnesses,—Edmund de Welleseleg, Nicholas de Palton, John de Merk, Richard le Eyr, Thomas le Devenshire, William Barnolde, Thomas le Salter, John Bullok, Hugh de Somerton, and many others. GIVEN at Wells, on the Sunday next after the feast of S. Dunstan, in the 14 year of the reign of King Edward the Second." [A.D. 1320].

The pension of 13s. 4d. is now paid by the vicar to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

The following list of vicars of St. Cuthbert is chiefly compiled from the registers in the Registry of the Diocese. These books,

possibly, do not contain the name of every vicar of the parish, but the omissions are certainly not many :—

## VICARS OF ST. CUTHBERT, WELLS.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1239—Robert Gyford occurs.                                | 1606—Benjamin Heyden, D.D. Dean of Wells, 1602.—Died 1607.                               |
| 1316—Richard de Penoz, or Pencroz.                        | 07—William Hall.   |
| 24—John de Saltford.                                      | 09—Thomas Hall.  |
| 27—John de Kynemford.                                     | 34—Thomas Westley  |
| 83—Walter Hamme, occurs                                   | 62—Charles Thirlby. Archdeacon of Wells  |
| 79 } John Spaldynge, occurs                               |  |
| 93 }  |  |
| 1403—Thomas Frome, occurs.                                | 83—Henry Winchcombe.   |
| 07—Walter . . . . occurs.                                 | 89—Joseph Shallett.  |
| 26—Thomas Stevenes  | 1704—John Pope.  |
| 24—Richard Harewell.                                      | 19—Richard Healey.   |
| 35—John Grene (his name occurs as vicar in 1431).         | 36—Lawson Huddleston.  |
| 53—John Stokys.   | 41—William Huddleston, Archdeacon of Wells.—Died March 1st, 1766, and buried at Kelston. |
| 71—Thomas Normanton.                                      | 66—Edmund Lovell, L.L.D.—Died July 18th, 1798.   |
| 87—John Mansford.   | 98—Samuel Serrell, resigned in Sept., 1832.—Died January 21st, 1842.                     |
| 88—John Menyman.  | 1832—Henry Watson Barnard, M.A., Canon Residentiary of Wells.                            |
| 1513—Peter Hunneles.                                      | 55—George Henry Sacheverell Johnson, M.A., Dean of Wells.—Resigned September, 1870.      |
| 15—William Mors.  | 70—John Beresford, M.A.  |
| 19—Richard Wolman, L.L.D. Dean of Wells, 1529.—Died 1537. |  |
| 30—Richard Clerkford.                                     |  |
| 43—Richard Edgewortha.                                    |  |
| 49—Richard Sheperde.                                      |  |
| 81—Paul Methwine.   |  |





## Church Rates.

**T**HE earliest church-rate I have found among the parochial records, was made in 1675, and it appears to have been the custom at that time, as it was for many years afterwards, to assess the In and Out-parishes as two districts, the former being called the "Towne," and the latter "the Countrey." Both districts were, however, included in the same rate, and assessed on the same scale. This practice continued until 1803, and up to the same period the churchwardens' accounts were kept as for one parish. Subsequent to 1803, the rates and accounts were kept as for two distinct parishes, but the accounts, as well as the proceedings of vestries on matters connected with the church, although distinct, were entered in the same book.

The proportion of rates levied in the In and Out-parishes, since the alteration referred to, differed in amount. The rate on the In-parish was double the amount of that for the Out-parish; *i.e.*, when a 4d. rate was levied on the In-parish, that on the Out-parish would be only 2d. Another alteration was made in 1866, when it was determined that the districts assigned to the Chapels of Ease at East Horrington, Easton, and Coxley, should be assessed separately for the purposes of the Chapels there, contributing also a sum towards the maintenance of the Mother Church.

In 1699, the following summary of the church-rate levied in that year, appears in the church book:—

### "TOWN RATE.

"High Street, £8 1s. 10d.; Chamberlain Street, £2 17s. 11½d.; Southover, £2 2s. 7½d.; Tucker Street, £1 4s. 11½: £14 7s. 4d."



## "COUNTRY.

"Milton, 19s. 9½d.; Weeke, 10s. 2d.; Walcombe, 9s. 10d.; Wookey Hole, 9s. 4½d.; Wormister, 17s. 11d.; Burcott, £1 12s. 1½d.; East Horrington, 7s. 10d.; Easton, £1 9s. 4d.; Harter's Hill, 8s. 2d.; Chilcott, 13s. 11d.; Dulcote, £1 9s. 3½d.; Hill House, 9s. 2d.; Prydey, 11s. 4d.; Whytenall, 10s. 6d.; West Horrington, £1 8s. 8d.; Coxley, £1 13s. 4d.; East Wells, £1 5s. 7d.; Polsham, £2 12s. 5½d.; £17 18s. 9d."

By the Act of 31 and 32 Vict. c. 109, compulsory church-rates were abolished. The following paper, which was circulated among the parishioners in October and November, 1870, (after an attempt to raise funds by a voluntary church-rate), will explain the manner in which the want of the ordinary church rate was supplied.

## "ST. CUTHBERT'S FUND FOR CHURCH EXPENSES.

"The Vicar and Churchwardens beg to lay before the Parishioners the following statement:—

"At an adjourned Vestry-Meeting held on the 11th of August last, after a full investigation of the liabilities in respect of Church Expenses, and after considering the failure of the Voluntary Church Rate, and the small amount raised by means of Voluntary Subscriptions, it was resolved—'That thereafter the mode of raising the funds for the necessary expenses of the Church be provided by the Offertory.'

"It was not thought advisable to carry this resolution into effect at once, and eventually another Vestry-Meeting was called for the 27th October, at which the financial matters of the Church were again considered, and certain objections to the proposed mode of raising the amount required were submitted. Due weight having been allowed to these, it was still thought undesirable to rescind the resolution passed in August; and accordingly, in a full Vestry, and with no dissentient voice, its adoption was re-affirmed. Under these circumstances, the Vicar and Churchwardens appeal to all worshippers at the Parish Church for their assistance in carrying out the proposed plan for meeting the expenses of the Church.

"More than half the current financial year has already elapsed, and no funds have as yet been raised for the maintenance of the Fabric and the carrying on of the Services. It is calculated that about £165 will be required for these purposes during the current year; it will be seen, then, that some action must be taken with all promptitude. Collections after the Morning and Evening Services of each Sunday will, therefore, be made on or after Sunday, November the 6th, and the proceeds will be applied to the payment of Church expenses, except when notice is previously given of their devotion to some other object. It is hoped that all who participate in the Services of the Church will contribute according to their means to the Fund for carrying them on, and that each member of the congregation will endeavour to make some weekly offering, however small, for this or some other purpose. Even the poorest can thus shew their thankfulness for the means of grace, and may well remember that 'If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.'

"29th October, 1870."

2 (Cor. viii., 12.")

The result of the new arrangements will be seen in the following statements:—

"Offertory for the year ended Oct. 29th, 1871.

"For general church expenses, £174 9s. 4d.; alms for the poor (including extra alms from the early communion offertory), £79 18s. 9d.; schools, missions, &c., £255 14s. 4d.: total, £309 17s. 5d."

"Offertory for the year ended Oct. 27th, 1872.

"For general church expenses, £133 11s. 9d.; alms for the poor, £64 15s. 3d.; schools, missions, &c., £51 10s. 9d.; additional services fund, £16 13s. 5d.: total, £256 11s. 1d."

The difference between the amounts raised for church expenses in these two years is accounted for by the fact that considerable arrears had to be met during the year 1871. The early communion offertory alms were temporarily assigned to the poor, but are now applied in aid of the fund for carrying on additional services, in accordance with an order of vestry made on the 3rd May, 1872 ; when it was resolved, on the recommendation of the church committee, that inasmuch as additional services of the church and parish necessitated the assistance of a second curate, "the monies received at the early communion be appropriated for the carrying on of such services."





## Priory or Hospital of St. John the Baptist.

**T**HE site of this ancient establishment is on the west side of St. John Street, which leads from High Street, and other parts of the city, into Southover. The name of the street is, no doubt, derived from its proximity to the priory. The ruins of this once venerable house have been recently removed, to make way for the new schools, which were built there in 1858.

This priory, or hospital, as it is often styled in documents of early date, was founded about A.D. 1206, for a Prior, or Master, and ten brethren. It was dedicated to St. John the Baptist, and owed its foundation to Hugh de Welles, Bishop of Lincoln, and his brother, Bishop Jocelin de Welles, who, as Godwyn states, "laying their purses together," endowed it with estates of considerable value. Both these Founders were natives of Wells. Jocelin became Bishop of this diocese A.D. 1206, and died A.D. 1242; and Hugh, who had been Archdeacon of Wells, became bishop of Lincoln, A.D. 1209, and died A.D. 1235. Collinson (vol II., page 310) quotes a will of Bishop Hugh, which, among many other gifts, contains a bequest of 500 marks to the building of the hospital at Wells. There are reasons for believing that the will noticed by Collinson (which is without date) was not the last will of the bishop. In the "*Liber Cantuariarum*," at Lincoln (F. 155-6), is recorded another will of Bishop Hugh, which was probably his *last* will. It is dated June 1st, A.D. 1233, and to it were set the seal of the testator, the seals of his brother Jocelin, of Welles, and others. The first bequest in the will is to the following effect:—"I bequeath and grant to my lord, the bishop

of Bath, my brother, and his assigns, the wardship of Tunring (?) with all its appurtenances : To have and to hold freely and quietly until the heir be of lawful age, applying the profits by the hands of the said Lord Bishop, or his assigns, to the use and repair of the hospital at Wells, along with two hundred marks which I have formerly paid to the said Lord Bishop, for the work of the aforementioned hospital. I give, moreover, to the said Lord Bishop and his assigns, my wardship of the land and heirs of Crombwell (?) which is of my fee, and the marriage of those heirs, so that they be not married beneath their station ; wishing and ordaining that the aforesaid Lord Bishop, or his assigns, out of the profits of the said manor, apply up to the age of heirship, to the work of the hospital at Wells, and the support of it, for the safety of my soul, and of the souls of my father and mother, and of all my ancestors and heirs, and for the soul of Jordan de Turre, as I have ordained to be done with my wardship of Tunring. Moreover, I give to the said hospital and to the brothers there serving God, and who will serve Him forever, all my lands of Dernford, which I gave with Agatha, my niece, in marriage, unless she have an heir of her body, to whom the land ought to remain." It appears that this will was confirmed by the King (Henry III.) at Westminster, 27th May, in the 11th year of his reign, and again at Fulham, May 15th, in the 13th year of his reign.

As usual with establishments of this kind, the priory from time to time received many additions to its original endowment, so that at the time of the dissolution of the House, after the Reformation, it had lands, revenues, and possessions in Beryll, East Wells, Polsham, Walcombe, and Melsbury, in Wells, and in Wookey, Dinder, Keinton Mandeville, Babcary, and other places, including the advowson of the church of Evercreech, with certain tythes and payments there. The lands at Keinton Mandeville and Babcary, as well as the church of Evercreech, with the chapel of Chesterblade, probably formed part of the original endowment of the hospital. According to inquisitions (in the time of Edward I.) to enquire of the lands of the Mandeville family, then settled at "Kington" (now Keinton Mandeville), it appears that Geoffrey de Mandeville then held the Manor of Kington, and the jurors affirmed that of all the lands of the said Geoffrey held in this place, before the prior of the Hospital of St. John, in Wells had been enfeoffed with part

thereof, only one suit was due to the King's Hundred of Catsash, and that the said Geoffrey and his heirs ought to acquit the prior of that suit. By another inquisition it appeared that the possessions held in Kington by the prior, consisted of eight messuages, one dove house, eleven acres of arable, and eleven acres and three roods of meadow. Upon the dissolution of the priory, the priory estates at Keinton devolved on the Crown, and were subsequently sold. They were, some years since, purchased with the Manor, as a further endowment of the church of Longbridge Deverill. The prior's barn, it is said, still exists, and has the appearance of a building of considerable antiquity.

"The church of Evercreech," according to *Collinson*, "with the church, or chapel, of Chesterblade, was anciently appropriated to the priory of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist, in the city of Wells. A vicarage was appointed by Bishop Jocelin to consist as follows, viz., in all oblations and obventions of the alterage, as well of the mother church as of the chapels belonging thereto, and in the residue of St. Peter's pence throughout the parish; in tithes of mills, and in all legacies, and in all small tithes, except the tithes of the prior and brethren of the Hospital of St. John the Baptist in Wells, and except all the tithes of the wool, lambs, and cheese of the said parish, which, by right, belonged to the said prior and brethren:—The prior and brethren to allow the vicar six pounds in silver, yearly, and the vicar to have a house on the south side of the church formerly inhabited by the chaplains, to serve the said church in person, assisted by a proper clerk; and to have a chaplain to perform mass in the chapel at Chesterblade every sunday and friday throughout the year. In augmentation whereof it was ordained by Bishop Beckynton, 10th Oct., 1463, that the vicar, in lieu of the six pounds in silver, above mentioned, should have the tythes of cheese of the whole parish, and the tithes of wool and lambs in the villages or hamlets of Chesterblade, Stoney Stratton, Southwood, and Bagbury, excepting those of the flock of the Bishop and his successors, which were appropriated to the prior and his brethren. The vicar was also to have the tithes of garb, and hay, of the lands on the east side of the way called Brodestrete, and also the tithes of Chesterblade, Stoney Stratton, and Southwood, except those of a place called Smaldon, which were made property of the prior and brethren. Then follows a

proviso, that if the portions thus assigned should exceed 20 marks, then the augmentation thus made was to be void.

Many additions to the original endowments were from time to time made. Bishop Ralph de Salopia (5th April, 1350), granted to the prior and brethren of the Hospital of St. John, in Wells, and the friars of that house, all the messuages and lands whereof he had been enfeoffed by William de Luttleton, William de Bathe, and William de Bourwardesleye, to the end that they should pay six marks per annum forever to a chaplain to say mass at the altar of St. Martin in the cathedral church of Wells for the good estate of the said Bishop while living, and for his soul after his decease; also for the soul of John de Somerton, formerly Abbot of Muchelney, and the souls of his successors in that convent.

In the survey of colleges, chantries, &c., made by commissioners in the first year of Edward VI. (1547), the chantry founded before the altar of St. Martin, in the cathedral, by Bishop Ralph, is thus noticed:—

“The Chauntry ther callyd Martyn’s Chauntry is yerely worthe in redy money comyng out of the issues and revenues of the late dissolved Hospitall or Priory of Saincte Johanis in Welles, and now to be levied and receyved of the issues and revenues of the Courte of Augmentacon, by vertue of a decree made in the same Courte,—£liij.

“Plate and Ornaments,—a chalice of silv’r weighing xv oz.

“Ornaments,—None.

“Mem’d.—John Dible, Clarke, of the age of lxx yeres, Incu’bent ther.”

Though the history of the founding of this hospital, as given by Collinson and Phelps, is somewhat different to that of Dugdale, yet, in the main, they agree.

*Collinson* thus speaks of the hospital:—“In that part of the city called Southover, is the Priory, or Hospital of St. John, founded about A.D. 1206, by Hugh de Welles, Archdeacon of Wells, and afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, for a prior, or master, and ten brethren, and endowed with lands called Beval, East Wallis Field, Polsham Field, West Close, and other estates to the amount of two hundred marks per annum. To this institution considerable additions were made by Bishop Jocelyne and others; but its revenues were decreased towards the time of the Reformation, when they were valued at £40 Os. 5d.

“The Bishop of the diocese was Patron; Peter was Prior in 1238; Walter, 1314, he died in 1323, and was succeeded by Philip de Exton; Henry de Exton was collated Feb. 20th, 1348,

he occurs, 1352; John Type, died March 12th, 1409; John Bartlett, succeeded July 13th, 1410,—he died 1438: Nicholas Cousin was collated by the Bishop, February 12th, 1438; Thomas Yle, Oct. 4th 1445: he resigned Aug. 1st, 1462; Thomas Cornish Bishop of Tyne, August 27th, 1462,—he resigned 1497; Reginald Ap David, July 1st, 1497; John Marler, April 9th, 1500,—he resigned 1613; Richard Smyth, Dec. 1st, 1513,—he died 1524; John Bartram, brother of the Hospital of Bridgwater, succeeded May 10th, 1524; Richard Clarkson was Prior, 1539. He and three brothers resigned the hospital to the King, Feb. 3rd, and had a pension of £12 per annum assigned him for his life. In 1553, there remained £4 in annuities; and pensions to William Marks, £4, John Charnock, £3 6s. 8d., and John Dytte, £2 13s. 4d. John Dyble, Incumbent of the same service here, had in 1553 a pension of £3 6s. 8d.

“The site of the hospital, with lands in Pinkesmore, Wookey, East Wells, and Southover, and the rectory of Evercreech, and advowson of the vicarage belonging to it, were after the dissolution, 32 Henry VIII., granted to Dr. John Clerk, Bishop of this See, and his successors, in consideration of the manor and park of Dogmersfield, in Hampshire. But 2 Edward VI. Bishop Barlow surrendered the same to the crown, and Queen Elizabeth in the 17th year of her reign, granted it to Sir Christopher Hatton. The manor and site are now the property of Peter Sherston, Esq.”

“Part of the old building is still standing, converted into a Woolcomber's shop. The street is called from it St. John-street, and a bridge near it, thrown over St. Andrew's stream, has, for the same reason, the appellation of St. John's bridge.”

*Phelps* gives somewhat the same account of the hospital, down to the grant to Sir Christopher Hatton. Afterwards he states that the property was conveyed to Sir William Doddington, Knt., and after passing through the names of Godwyn and Nutley, it came to Thomas Edwards, “who released the whole to Peter Davis, Esq., in 1732,” and from him the descent of the estate is traced to John Davis Sherston, Esq. Much of these accounts is founded in error. It is certain that the hospital and its appendant estates belonged to the ancestors of the Earl of Warwick, in and before A.D. 1667. In that year Robert Lord Brooke made a settlement of extensive estates in several counties in England, and

conveyed the same to trustees, including the Manor of Clutton, the Manor and Prebend of Dulcote and Chilcote, and all the lands of the said Robert Lord Brooke in Dulcote and Chilcote; a messuage and farm called Buryall, in Wells, and other his lands, tenements, and hereditaments in the town and parishes of Wells; "and also all that capital messuage and scite of the late dissolved Priory of St. John, in Wells, aforesaid, with the appurtenances therof, and 220 acres of land, more or less, in Wells aforesaid, Buryal, Walcombe, Polsham, and Marleborough, to the same priory theretofore belonging and appertaining." In 1716 another settlement was made by William Lord Brooke, one of the objects of which was to rectify a mistake or omission in the settlement of 1667, and the priory of St. John, with the 220 acres of land thereto belonging, were included in the arrangements thereby made. In the same year a recovery was suffered of the entire estates comprised in the original settlement, the uses of which were for the benefit of said William Lord Brooke his heirs and assigns.

Leland, the antiquary, after noticing Bishop Bubwith's Alms-house, thus refers to St. John's Hospital:—"There was another Hospitall of St. John yn the town, standing hard on the ripe by south of S. Andreas streame. This Hospitall was foundid by . . . and Hughe, Bishop's."

Dugdale's Monasticon gives the following account of the hospital.

"Hugh de Welles, Archdeacon of Wells, and afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, was, about the beginning of King John's reign, the original founder of this hospital, in the southern part of the city, dedicated to St. John Baptist, which was so much augmented by Joceline, Bishop of Bath, and other benefactors, that in 26 Henry VIII. the yearly revenue of the master and brethren amounted to £41 8s. 6½d. according to Speed, and £40 0s. 2½d. according to Dugdale. The site, and most of the lands belonging to this house, were granted, 32 Henry VIII. to John Clerk, then Bishop of Bath and Wells, and his successors in consideration of the Manor and Park of Dogmersfield, &c. However, the crown got it again afterwards, and granted it 17th Elizabeth, to Sir Christopher Hatton.

"Masters:—Walter, died 1323; John Typpe, died 1409; John Bartlett, 13 July, 1410; Nicholas Consyn, 1439,—he resigned 20 Sept. 1445; Thomas Yle, 4th Oct., 1445; John 'Tinenensis Episcopus', 21 August, 1482; Thomas Cornish, 5 August, 1483; Reginald Ap David, confirmed Prior, 1st June, 1487; John Marler, 9 April, 1500,—he occurs 1510; Richard Smyth, upon whose death John Burtram was installed 10 May, 1524; John Pynnock, occurs Prior, 26 Hen. VIII."

"The surrender of the hospital, 3 Feb. 30 Henry VIII., is in the Augmentation Office. Appended to it is the common seal representing St. John Baptist, with the following legend:—

**'Sigill. Hospital. Sci Johannis d. Welles.'**"

Bishop Hugh of Lincoln is said to be the founder, and Bishop



Jocelin and Sir Edmund Lyons, Knt., are mentioned as benefactors. Then follows an abstract of valor ecclesiasticus, 26 Henry VIII. Johannes Pynnock, Prior:—

	£	s.	d.
Wellensis, Civ' Redd' Assis,' ... ..	1	12	4
Wokey, Redd' ten,' ... ..	0	13	4
Dynder, Redd' Assis,' ... ..	0	6	8
Wokey, Redd' Molend', ... ..	1	18	0
Wokey, Terr' d nio' ... ..	6	0	0
Wells, &c., Perquis' Cur,' ... ..	0	19	0
Pynckmore, Redd' et terr', et ten', ... ..	2	13	5½
Pynckmore, Perquis' Cur,' ... ..	0	8	0
Kington Maundefelde, Redd' assis', &c., ... ..	4	15	8
Kington Maundefelde, Perquis' Cur', ... ..	0	4	0
Westdowne, Parsonatus ... ..	4	2	0
Evereunche, Parsonatus, ... ..	10	8	0

Before proceeding further, it may be as well to say a few words with respect to some of the priors or masters of this Hospital. The lists quoted do not contain the names of all the Priors. John was Prior A.D. 1292, in which year his name occurs in a deed relating to the founding of a chantry before the altar of St. Edmund, in Exeter Cathedral, for the soul of Master Walter Lechlade, Succentor in Wells, and Precentor in Exeter cathedral.

Thomas Cornish, one of the Priors, resided in Wells many years. He became head of the hospital in 1462, and in the course of his life, held the following preferments:—1493, Provost of Oriel College, Oxford; 1494, Canon of Wells; 1489, Rector of Axbridge; 1489, Rector of Wookey—Banwell; 1499, Chancellor of Wells; 1502, Precentor or Chanter; 1502, Rector of Claversham (?).

He was also Bishop of Tyne, and Suffragan to Bishop Fox, under the title of "Episcopus Tynensis," and to Hugh Oldham, Bishop of Exeter. He died July 3rd, 1513, and was buried in Wells Cathedral, on the east side of the door leading up into the Chapter House, where his canopied tomb still remains, from which the brass memorials originally attached to it were long since removed. On the front of the moulding of the cover of the tomb, is the following record engraved in brass:—

**"Obijt. Supradictus Dns. Thomas Tinien-  
sis. Ep'us. Tertio. Die Mensis Julij.  
Anno Dni Mccccxlii. Cujus Animæ  
P'pitiatur. Deus. Amen."**

The Prior and Brethren had several houses in Wells, which

with nearly all their other possessions, were granted to divers persons on leases for lives, or for terms of years. Among the city records is an original lease by Prior John, whereby he grants a house in Grope Lane, in consideration of a fine of 40s. in silver, and 5s. of annual rent. This lease bears no date, but from the character of the hand writing, it may be assigned to the reign of Edward I. (1272-1307.)

Walter de Compton, Burgess of Wells, by his will (proved on Sunday next before the feast of St. Martin, 1362) bequeathed a legacy of 20s. for the mending of the house of the Prior of St. John, in Wells.

Bishop Thomas Bekynton was probably a benefactor to the hospital, in proof of which his armorial bearings were found in the ruins when the buildings were pulled down to make way for the new schools.

It is probable that the revenues of the priory were subject to frequent changes and fluctuations. Several certificates of exemption from the King's tenths occur in the episcopal registers. Among others, is one dated at Wells 29th June, 1416, and another dated at Wells, 2nd January, 1416-17.

In 1462, a serious and protracted dispute occurred between the prior and the corporation of Wells, the nature of which will be seen from the following abstract of the original deed (still with the city records). The deed is dated

"The first day of August, the yere of the regne of Kyng Harre the vijth, the xxij;" and is made "Betwen S'r John Marler, P'oure of the house or hospitall of Sainct John Baptist of Welles forsaide, and the bretheryn of the same place of the one p'tie, and John Tyler, Maister of the towne and borow'h of Welles, and the comm'alte of the same, of that other partie."

It begins by reciting that disputes had arisen between the prior and convent, and the corporation of Wells, and sets out at length another deed, dated 10th March, 5 Edward IV. The disagreements related chiefly to a close of pasture in the north part of Southover, and a house belonging to it. The settlement is made in these words :—

"Now for a p'petuall and ffynall pease and end to be hadde bytwene them foreuermore as well by the saide p'oure and con'ent, as by the saide Maist' and Comynalte, by one assent and consent it is ordeynyd agreed and vtt'ly det'mynyd that the saide p'oure and co'ent and ther successours shall have and enjoy the saide close of pasture and howse with th' appurten'es lying in Southover as in therowne demene; paying therefore yerly vnto the saide Maist' and Comynalte and to ther successours xjs. of lawfull money of England in ma'ner and forme as her aft' foloweth,—that is to wite,—Wheras the said p'oure and co'ent have and yerly

p'ceve a annuall rente of the saide Maist' and Comynalte of xxvj. vj., as it apperith above in the olde composicions,—the same p'oure and con'ent for them and ther successours hith fully agreed and det'myned by this p'sent composiçon for ev'more, that the saide yerely rent of xjs. for the saide close and howse shall alway be abated and deducte owte of the saide annu'll rent of xxvjs. vjd., so that from hensforth the same p'oure and con'ent and ther successours shall p'ceve and receve of the said annuell rent of xxvjs. vjd. but only xvs. vj. at iiij vsuell termes in the yere for ev'more, to be paid by evyn porçons." The witnesses are: "John Rodnay, Knt., Nicholas Sainotlo, Edmond Sainotlo, Squyars, Nicholas Trappe, John Ustwayt, John Welshot, John Maudlyn," and others.

The convent seal is attached, on which is represented a figure of St. John Baptist.

In the chapel of this priory many persons were ordained for holy orders. Thus in Bishop Stillington's register it is recorded that on the 21st of April, 1470, John, bishop of "Tino," ordained John Nitherson as priest, in the conventual church of St. John the Baptist, in Wells; and on the vigil of the Holy Trinity, 16th June, 1470, the same bishop ordained John Smyth as priest, in the same chapel. On the 25th February, 1479-80, in the chapel of the Blessed Mary of Redcliffe, Bristol, William Vohye, of West Pennard, was ordained sub-deacon; on the 18th March, as deacon, in the conventual church of St. John the Baptist, in Wells, and as priest, in the same church, May 27th, in the same year. These are a few instances only, selected from a long list of such ordinations.

The old priory, or hospital, was used for different purposes after its dissolution. In modern times a portion of the building was turned into a day school, and subsequently another portion became a woolcombers' shop. In the year 1812 it was determined to establish a "central school in this diocese," and Wells was the place selected for it. The late Peter Sherston, Esq., liberally granted a part of the site to the bishop of Bath and Wells for the time being, in trust for the purposes of the school, and on this site a school was built (by means of a subscription of nearly £800), capable of accommodating 300 children. This school continued to be used until about the year 1858. For some time before this, increased school accommodation was urgently needed. To meet this want, John Davis Sherston, Esq., actuated by the same liberal feelings as those of his grandfather, granted the remaining buildings as a site for the new school, the foundation stone of which was laid, July 16th, 1858, a parchment being placed in a glass bottle, and deposited in the stone, inscribed,

"The foundation stone of the Wells Central National Schools, erected by voluntary contributions (assisted by a grant of £1400 from the Government Committee of Council on Education), was laid on sixteenth day of July, Anno Domini 1858, by Lucy, the wife of the Very Rev. George Henry Sacheverell Johnson, M.A., Dean of Wells, and vicar of Saint Cuthbert's, in this city. Scite given by John Davis Sherston, Esquire, on which the ancient priory of Saint John the Baptist formerly stood."

"Prosper Thou the work of our hands upon us, O prosper Thou our handy work."—Psalm 90, v. 17.—J. C. Oxley.

"PRESENT: Auckland, Bath and Wells; G. H. S. Johnson; Frederick Beadon, Arthur Du Cane; C. M. Church; John Troutbeck; Henry E. Ravenhill; Hugh G. Marshall; W. I. Welsh; Lucy Johnson; Maria C. Tudway; Florence Eden; Harriet E. Johnson; Maria H. Eden; Mary Welsh; Elizabeth F. Troutbeck; Emma Marshall; Frances Laura Johnson; William Welsh, jun.; Edwin Hippisley, Architect; George Beaven, Builder; Tho. Serel; Edmund Davis; John Nicholls."

There is an ancient pension payable out of the hospital, and lands belonging to it, of £3 10s. 0d. This was formerly paid to the Dean and Chapter of Wells, but now to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England.





## Mountery College.

**T**HE same reasons which had induced Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury to build a "close" for the vicars choral, probably led Bishop Ralph Erghum to provide the means for a settled habitation for the chantry priests who had somewhat similar duties to perform in the cathedral. Before the time of Bishop Ralph of Shrewsbury (who died in 1363), the vicars lived in different parts of the city, by which much inconvenience was occasioned, as well as occasional complaints, from the too intimate intercourse between the town's people, and those whose almost undivided attention was required in the services of the church. The chantry priests, like the vicars choral, found accommodation where they best could; some within the cathedral, but most of them beyond its precincts, in the city. Bishop Erghum had been translated from Salisbury to Wells in 1388, and became a considerable benefactor to the cathedral. He purchased and rebuilt a house, then called "Christieshamesyn," (Cristesham's Inn) afterwards known as "The George," for pilgrims and others coming to Wells, which he vested in the Dean and Chapter, in whose possession it continued until 1854, when it was sold to Stuckey's Banking Company, who, on its site, erected their present Banking house. Bishop Erghum died April 10th, 1400-1, having by his will directed his executors to build in a street, called "La Mountery," or "Mountroy," a house for fourteen chantry priests, or chaplains, to celebrate divine service in the cathedral. This college was soon afterwards erected, and, it is said, dedicated to St. Ann. By a deed dated January 20th,

1399, he founded a chantry at the altar of St. Edmund, in the nave of the cathedral, for the souls of Gilbert and Agnes, his father and mother, and of Agnes Robas, his sister.

Among the city records is an original document, settling a dispute between the Dean and Chapter, the Chaplains, and the Corporate body. The date is 26th November, 1430 (not many years after the completion of the college). This deed is made between the venerable men, the Dean and Chapter of the cathedral church of Wells, the "Capellanos annual's in eccle'i'e p'di'ca existent' in nouo Collegio apud Mountery in Welles," also John Whitle and Elizabeth his wife, of the one part, and Richard Halle, "Magr'm sive Custodem Gilde de Welles," and the Commonalty of the same town, of the other part; recites that a strife had arisen between the parties, upon a demand of 20s. rent claimed by the corporation, out of a messuage in which said John and Elizabeth then dwelt, in High-street, and of which they were seized for the term of her life, the reversion belonging to the Dean and Chapter, who were seized thereof, to the use and profit of the said chaplains annuellers. An award was made by Bishop John Stafford that the Dean and Chapter should in future receive 12s., and the master and commonalty 8s. of the said rent; and that one of the chaplains annuellers who should celebrate the Erghum mass at the altar of St. Martin, in the cathedral every day, except on Holy Thursday, should say a certain prayer for the master or warden and commonalty of Wells, and their successors, and in case of default, should pay a penalty of 2d.

To this document there were five pendant seals: 1, the seal of the Dean and Chapter; 2, the Bishop's seal; 3, the college seal, very perfect, representing the figure of St. Catherine under a canopy, holding the usual distinguishing emblem of this saint—a wheel; 4 and 5, the seals of John Whitle and wife. The legend on the seal, is, I believe, "*S. Robt Coll.*"

The college (as before observed) is said to have been dedicated to St. Ann, but the seal to this document seems to cast a doubt on that statement.

The yearly payment of 8s., reserved to the corporation of Wells, continued to be paid until the year 1835, when the same was sold by that body, and the future payments extinguished.

This college shared the same fate as all other establishments of the kind—dissolution;—one of the results of the Reformation.

Bishop Tanner, in his *Notitia Monastica*. (ed. 1788), gives the following account of the college :

"MOUNTERY COLLEGE.—Ralph Ergum, bishop of Bath and Wells, who died 1401, appointed by his will his executors to build, in the street called La Mountery, since College lane; a house for the fourteen chantry priests officiating in the Cathedral of Wells, and a hall for them to eat in common, which were called Mountrey, or Moundroy College; valued, 26 Hen. 8, at £120 ls. 4d. per ann. in the whole, as Sandcroft's M.S. Valor; at £83 16s. 0d. ob., as Dr. Archer; and £11 18s. 8d. as Dugd. and Speed (which last is said to be the clear value in Sandcroft's M.S.), and granted, 2 Ed. 6, to John Ayleworth and John Lacy."

In notes to this account it is said that the "society was styled *Societas Presbyterorum annuellarum Novæ aulæ Wellens.*," and that the number had "probably increased before the Reformation, for in A.D. 1555 there were seventeen who had pensions, and are styled "*Coleginarii sive cantaristæ in Collegio sive nova aula de la Mounteroy prope civitatem Wellensem.*" A query is added "whether the college was not dedicated to St. Ann, and had not the induction of the chantry priests, for 24 July, 1520, "Hen. Harrison institutus ad cantariam S. Kalixti in ecc. Cath. Wellensi; et scriptum fuit pro inductione principalibus Collegii S. Annæ de Wells."

The pension list of Cardinal Pole, compiled in 1555, contains the following names of persons then in receipt of pensions out of the revenues of the dissolved college; Robert Deraunte; John Eringtoun; John Broke; Henry Banks; Thomas Clerke, and Robert Sprite, each, 72s. 8d.; John Dible, £3 3s. 8d.; Walter Shepperde; John Pawle; William Burge; John Newes; Egidii Buttall; Morgan Conge; Richard Castlyn, each 100s.

In the survey of Chantries, Free-chapels, &c., made by the Commissioners of Edward VI., in the first year of his reign (1547), the College of Mountrye is thus noticed :—

"THE CATHEDRAL CHURCHE OF SAINCTE ANDREWE IN WELLS."

"The College of New Hall or La Mountroye w'in the Cite of Welles, foundyd and erected for the maynten'oe of xviiij chauntrie priests, celebratyng within the sayde cathedrall churche, is yearly worthe in landes, ten'ts and hereditam'ts in the tenure of sondery p'sones as may appeare p'ticularly more at large by the rental of the same—£xxij. iij.; wherof in rents resolute payde yearly to sondery p'sones—lxxiij. viij., and so remayneth clere—£xix ix. viijd.

"Plate and Ornament's.—Plate, one chalice, gilt.—xvijoz. Ornaments and implements prayed at £iiij. xvijjs. ijd.

"This College was erected for a com'en howse, or lyving of xvij chaurtrie priests foundyd w'in the saide cathedral church hereafter next followynge, who before the erection of the same had no certain place of habitaçon, but lyved abrode in the cite wher theye coulde get roomes for theyre money.

"There was distributed yerely equally amongst the saide xvij chaurtrie priests, £xi. viijs. viijd. p'cell of the foresaid clere yerely value in man'r and forme followynge, viz., for the com'en table,—£vi. xvjd.; in augmentaçon of their salaries,—ciiijs., and for redyng and resyting the names of their benefactors—iijjs. iiijd., whiche being equally devyded, amounteth to xijs. viijd. ev'y of theym.

"The incu'bent of Erghum's Chaurtrie, hereafter following, for the time being, receyved yerely out of the same clere yerely value, for singinge dayly morrowe masse w'in the said cathedral church,—xxs.

"The rest of the proffectes wer employed for the wages of the howse as the receyv'r, cooke, launder and others, and for their fuell, woode, and other necessaries and repa'cons of the saide college, and the xth yerely due for the same."

Of Bishop Erghum's own chantry, in the cathedral, the survey gives the following particulars:—

"One chaurtrie ther foundyd by Raffe Erghum is yerely worth in redy money to be paide by the foresaide Deane and Chapiture of the issues, fruts, and proffectes of the P'sonage of Pocolchurche appropri'd to the same Deane and Chapiture,—£iiij.

"Plate and Orna'ts.—None but a chalice,—vjoz.

"Walter Shepherde, clerke, of the age of xxxvij yeres, incu'bent ther. The same incu'bent songe or saide morrowe masse daily w'in the saide cathedrall church, and receyved yerely therfor out of the revenues of the saide college of La Mount Roy—xxs., as before is declared amongst the memoranda of the same college."

Besides the ordinary salaries to the Chaplains or Incumbents of the chantries, there were payments for wine, &c., used in the religious services performed by them. These payments are noticed in the survey thus:—

"Breade, wyne, and wax expendyd by the Incu'bents of sondery the foresaide chauntries, are yerely worthe in redy money to be paide by the foresaid Deane and Chapiture for breade, wyne, and wax expendyd by the incu'bents of sondery the foresaide chauntries, videl't:—The chauntries called Burnell's and Hasilshewes, Husee's, Wellyngton's, Godelee's, Erghum's, Bubwithes and Storthwatt's, w'th the mayntenance of one lampe ther—lijs iiijd."

The site of this college is now enclosed, and forms part of the lawn and grounds belonging to the mansion of C. C. Tudway, Esq. The college stood a short distance from, and on the south side of New-street. The original edifice had been modernised, and is described by *Phelps* as "a large building in the Elizabethan style, with gable windows." For some years before its destruction, it had been used as a school.

At the dissolution, the college was valued at £38 14s. 0d. per ann. The site, with the buildings and revenues belonging thereto, were granted by letters patent under the great seal of England, 18th August, 2 Edw. VI., in consideration of £728 0s. 2d., to John Ayleworth, then General Receiver for the County of



Somerset; and William Lacy, and to their heirs for ever; to hold in free socage of the manor of Stalbridge, in Dorsetshire.

This John Ayleworth lived in Wells for many years, and held considerable property there. He was a man of great social importance, which is attested by the fact that he was elected as one of the representatives for the city in Parliament no less than six times, viz:—13th October, 1 Edw. VI., 21st February, 7 Edw. VI.; 12 Jan., 4 and 5 Philip and Mary; 21st Nov., 1 Elizabeth; 24th Dec., 5 Eliz.; 12th May, 13 Elizabeth. About five years after this he died, and Ashton Ayleworth, probably his son, was elected in his place. In the city records is a curious notice of this John Ayleworth, in connection with his first election as one of the city members: "At the same convocaçon, by the mere benevolence of Master Ayleworth, Esquier, he hath g'ven vnto the Maister of the Towne, and the hole burgesses, certen pottels of Gascon wyne, to be dely'ved by Edward Bull, at the potation;—viz., at ev'y boarde when the seyde Maister and burgesses shall sitt at the tyme of the potation, to have one pottell of Gascon wyne, w'ch was im'ediately the same day accomplyshed." These "pottles of wyne" (each of which contained about four quarts) had the desired effect, the donor having been elected as M. P. in the following year.

Portions of the college estates remained in the holding of the Ayleworth family until the end of the 17th century. In the year 1700, part of the property, including a shop, formerly held with and adjoining the George Inn, and another inn, called the Katherine Wheel, were sold. On the site of this shop, part of the new bank of Stuckey and Co., and the house now used as the Diocesan Depôt were built. The vendors were "John Aylworth, of London, Gentleman (described as eldest son and heir apparent of John Aylworth, then late citizen and leather seller of the said city, deceased, and Mary his wife), who conveyed the property to William Haines, of Wells, barber; and it is a remarkable fact that the trade of a barber was carried on in the shop so purchased during a period of nearly 150 years. The other portions of the college property were probably sold about the same time as the shop purchased by William Haines. In the early part of the last century the site of the college was owned by persons named Evans, of Wells. In the county records, under date "Bridg-

water, 1747," a notice occurs to the effect that John Davis, of Abergavenny, under a power of attorney from Brailsford Hughes, of Gelly, in Lauretherin, Co. Monmouth, Esq. (reciting that Mary Evans, then late of Wells, singlewoman, had lately died seized of several messuages, &c., at Burcot, Week, Dulcott, Godney, and in the Liberty of St. Andrew in Wells, including the site of the college; and that John Evans, her next cousin and heir at law, being a papist, was incapable, by the laws of England, to inherit the premises, by descent, devise, or otherwise), had made and entered the claim of the said Brailsford Hughes to all the messuages, &c., whereof said Mary Evans had died seized, &c., in the County of Somerset, as next protestant heir of kin of said John Evans, and as next protestant heir of said Mary Evans. The name of Evans did not wholly disappear as owners of the property referred to, as will appear in the deed conveying the site of the college &c., to Charles Tudway, Esq., ancestor of the present worthy owner of the property.

By a deed dated 13 March, 1755, John Pine, of East Down, Devon, devisee of Mary Evans, then late of Wells, spinster, and Letitia Hughes, of Abergavenny, spinster, cousin and sole heiress of the said Mary Evans, conveyed to Richard Slade, gent., in trust for Charles Tudway, Esq., "All that messuage or tenement, situate, lying, and being in Wells aforesaid, formerly called or known by the name of 'The College,' and adjoining unto a lane callcd Mountroy Lane." This Charles Tudway, Esq., built the mansion now occupied by his descendant, C. C. Tudway, Esq., soon after the date of this deed.

### ANCIENT CHAPEL AT POLSHAM.

The information I have been enabled to obtain in connection with the old chapels formerly standing at Polsham and Southway, is very scanty. At Polsham, it is said by *Phelps*, and other authors, that a mansion stood, which belonged to the Bishops of Sherborne, used by them when they visited this locality, which in early times formed part of their diocese. I have never found any proof of this statement, and I think it far more probable that the house referred to was at Pilton. The principal reason for suggesting Polsham as the site of the mansion of the Bishops of Sherborne is the assumed similarity of

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the ancient name of "Poelt" to the modern name of Polsham. The former is much more likely to mean "Pilton," and it is a well known fact that there was a large and very ancient house at Pilton, at a very remote date, which for many years before the Reformation, belonged to the Abbots of Glastonbury.

I have very little doubt that a chapel stood in this hamlet before the Conquest, and I believe the origin of the name "Polsham" may be traced to the dedication of this old chapel. In the charter of Edward the Confessor, confirming the possessions of the church of Wells, about A.D. 1063, the name "Paulesham" occurs, and it is certain that the chapel there was dedicated to St. Paul, from which is, without much doubt, derived St. Paul's, or Paul's-ham, the meaning of the termination "Ham" being a place of habitation, or a small hamlet or village. It is true that I have not been able to find any direct notice of a chapel there prior to the Confessor's Charter, but Dr. Whitaker states that many chapels existed during the Saxon times, which, after the division of parishes, and the erection of parochial churches, fell into disuse.

At the Reformation, this chapel was suppressed, and soon fell into ruins. All traces have, I believe, disappeared. In the Royal Commissioners' Survey of chapels, chantries, &c., made 1, Edw. VI., the following return respecting this chapel is found :

"The chapel of Saincte Paule of Polsham is yerely worthe in the rente of the saide chapel w<sup>th</sup> one acre of lande belonginge to the same,—xxd.

It thus appears that the chapel had little or no endowment, nor any priest specially attached to it.

Near the junction of the road from Polsham to Castle, was a small parcel of land called Chapel-Croft, probably the site of the chapel of St. Paul.

### SOUTHWAY CHAPEL.

The old chapel that heretofore stood at Southway has, like its neighbour at Polsham, entirely disappeared. Very little is known about it beyond the survey of the Commissioners of Edward VI., already referred to. It was dedicated to S. Thomas a' Becket, but it seems to have been almost without endowment, as well as without a priest specially assigned to do duty in it. Had

there been such a priest when the survey was made, his name and age would have been set forth. The survey gives the following account of the chapel :—

“The Chapell of Southway, late of Thomas Bekyt, w'thin the sayde paryshe, is yerely worthe in the rent of the said chapell with ij acres of arable land to the same chapell belonginge—xijd.

### SOUTHOVER CHAPEL.

The information I have found with respect to the old chapel formerly standing in Southover, is very little. *Leland*, (ob. 1552), who wrote an account of his personal observations on many of the principal places in England, gives the following account of Wells, in which he refers to a chapel as having been before then in Southover :—“The toune of Welles is sette yn the rootes of Mendepe Hille, in a stony soil, ful of springes; wherof it hath the name. The chefest spring is caullid Andres Welles, and risith in a medow plot not far above the est end of the cathedrale chirch, first renning flat west and entering into Coscumb water, somewhat by south. The toune of Welles is large; I esteme it to lak litle of 2 miles in cumface, al for the most part buildid of stone. The streates have streamelettes of springes almost yn every one renning, and occupiyth making of cloth. The chifest of the town lyeth by est and west, and sum parte cast out with a streat by south, in the out part wherof was a chappelle, as sum say, of Thomas Beket.”

The survey of King Edward's Commissioners, already quoted gives the following very brief account of this chapel :—

“The chapell of Saincte Andrie is yerely wo'the in the rent of the same chapell scituate in Southov' in Welles aforesaide,—xijd.

It will be observed that in this survey the dedication of this chapel is said to be to St. Andrew, but *Leland* speaks of it as being dedicated to Thomas a' Becket, which was probably a mistake. The chapel now belonging to the Wesleyan Methodists is, I believe, built on the site of the ancient chapel of St. Andrew, alluded to by *Leland*, and noticed in Edward's survey. The old chapel was, for many years, used by members of the Presbyterian denomination.

There was a small cemetery attached to this chapel, and many remains of those who were laid there have been from time to time disturbed.

## CHILCOTE CHAPEL.

There was formerly a chapel at Chilcote, to which a chaplain was attached, but it is not noticed in the survey of Edward VI., which gives an account of the Chapels, &c. in Wells. At the dissolution, service in the chapel ceased, but was revived, 3 Philip and Mary, (1555). After the death of Queen Mary, according to *Phelps*, the chapel with certain lands appurtenant to it, were granted by the King, and ultimately came into the possession of Thomas Westley, Esq., of Shepton Mallet, whose daughter married the Rev. Edmund Lovell, LL.D. (Vicar of St. Cuthbert's 1796-1798), from whom it descended to the late Joseph Lovell-Lovell, Esq., and it now belongs to Edwin Lovell, Esq.

There are portions of the original chapel still to be seen. These have been converted into farm buildings, and are occupied by the tenant of the adjoining farmhouse.





## The Church, and Churchyard,

AS PLACES OF BURIAL.

**W**HO can visit an old church, or churchyard, without noticing the many memorials,—some magnificent and costly—so me humble and inexpensive—of those whose names and memory, but for those frail records, would be wholly forgotten; or who is there that can look on this “field of death” without feeling emotions of melancholy, knowing that under the soil reposes the dust of thousands who, before being laid in the “narrow tomb,” lived here in the full vigour and pride of youth, health, and strength, until stricken down by disease, accident, or old age? “Here lie on one cold couch those who have loved and those who have hated each other; friends and foes; relatives and strangers; the rich and the poor; the oppressor and the oppressed; the educated and the illiterate; the saint and the reprobate.” Here

. . . . .  
“Side by side,  
The poor man and the son of pride,  
Lie calm and still!”

Church-yards are of very ancient origin, and some writers trace the custom of using them as places for the interment of the dead, to Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury, about A.D. 750. There have been additions to the church-yard of St. Cuthbert, on more than one occasion. A small portion was added many years ago at the south-west corner, and a still larger portion was added in the early part of the year 1807, at the western end, adjoining the present Blue School premises. The church-yard was finally closed, and the new cemetery was first used for burials, in October, 1855.

There were numerous "head stones," and a few "monuments" in the church-yard. Thé whole of the former were laid flat on the surface of the ground about fifteen or sixteen years ago, and the larger number of them have already become decayed, and many have disappeared. A few of the "monuments" still remain. These changes were, and still are, disapproved by many persons. Within the church many of the gravestones have been removed from their original positions, especially those formerly in the chancel, so that in the course of a very short period the burial places of those over whose remains the stones were placed, will be wholly forgotten. The references in the following brief notices are mostly to the original position of the grave-stones.

Any attempt to give a perfect account of the grave-memorials heretofore in the church-yard, would be altogether hopeless. The following notices of those which remain within the church, will serve partially to preserve some remembrance of them:—

William Andrews					
Elizabeth, 2nd dan. of Geo. Andrews	...	...	...	...	1689
George Andrews	...	...	...	...	1695

"Here resteth in asured hope of a joyful resurrection, Philip Mahat, Master of Arts, and Bridget Mahat, his wife, a daughter of Andrew Bowerman, the elder, of Wells, Gent., deceased; which Philip departed this life the 23rd of February, 1634; and the said Bridget died the 12th day of July, 1622."

"Here lyeth the body of William Bowerman, and sonne of Andrew Bowerman, Gent., who deceased the 13th day of April, 1644."

(The above are from a stone found under old pews in the north transept, in 1856. Andrew Bowerman was probably a son of William Bowerman, Recorder of Wells, 1572—1590).

	DATE OF DEATH.
Jane, dan. of Edward Biss, Esq., of Wells	— 4 Mar., 1676.
Frances, " " "	— 17 Nov. 1681.
Ann, " " "	— 14 Mar., 1682.

(The 3 preceding, from Chancel).

Alexander Baron, with Mary Baron, his Mother,		AGE.
Son and wife of Charles Baron, of Wells, Gent.	— May 22, 1719	— 66
Charles Baron, Gent., (Mayor of Wells 8 times)	— Oct. 13, 1729	
Charles Baron, Gent., son of the above C. B.	— Dec. 1, 1750	— 71
Betsy, wife of James Baron	— Sep. 16, 1765	— 37
Matthew Baron, (by Joan his wife)	— June 22, 1740	
Jane, Widow of Matt. B.	— Sep. 24, 1763	— 71

(The preceding 6 from centre walk of nave).

The following is from a small monument in south aisle;—

"Neere unto ys Pillar lyeth ye boddy of Cisely Bower, dan. and co-heire of John Dorrington, of Collingbourne, in Wiltshire, gentlem'n: A loving wife 3 years toe

William Bower, of ys citty, gent., by whom shee had many children, which shee trayned upp in ye feare of God. Shee was devoted to prayer, and exprest good use therof. Shee was many times dead in the sight of the people, but ye Lord had mercy on her that shee lived many yeares after, and did many good workes, in helping ye poore, sick, and lame, wherein ye Lord blessed her hand. Shee remembered ye poore, aged women at her death. Shee dyed on Whitsonday, 1639, and was buried in the grave of her sister, Anne ye wife of Adrian Bower, Gent., who dyed the first of January, 1624."

The burial place of the old Wells family of Coward is in the south transept, and in the adjoining chapel, often called "Coward's Chapel." This had been previously the resting place of another old Wells family, the Leighs, connected with the Cowards; John Coward (living, 1589), having married Catherine, dau. of Thomas Leigh. There are two altar-tombs against the south wall of the transept, bearing the following memorials:—

"Here resteth the body of Thomas Leigh, gent., who dees'd the 13th day of November, A'o D'i 1551."

"Here likewise resteth the body of Alice, the wife of Thomas Leigh, gent., June, 27, 1606."

No arms appear on these tombs, but they were, ar. on a chev. gu. three martlets; on a chief of the second, a culverin dismounted. Crest, a demihound sa. holding a stag's head ar. attired.

"Here lyeth the body of Mrs. Catherine Coward, widow, who was buried March the 21st, 1670."

"the body of John Whitin, gentilm . . . (obliterated)."

"Here lyeth the body of George Coward, gent., who died, August the 24, Anno Dom. 1677."

(The preceding 3 are from stones in the floor).

"Disce, viator, quanti viri cineres hic inscius premas. Reliquiæ sunt clarissimi viri Gulielmi Coward, armigeri: quem frustra jam revocat patria consultissimum juris Eirenarcham; quem desiderat Hospitium Lincolnense servientem ad legem, cum primis venerandum; quem repetit Curia Parliamentaria toties Civium Wellensium suffragiis cooptatum Burgensem, et sibi jamdudum notum, Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ vindicem inexpugnabilem; quem et civitas Wellensis ægrius tulit abreptum, municipem optimum, nunquam commissura ut defuncti Recordatoris sui memoria intercidat, Obiit Apr. 8, An'o D'ni 1705, Ætatis suæ 71."

"Marmor hoc statuendum curavit Gulielmi' filius, parentis desideratissimi memoriam sacrum."

Arms: Or, 2 bars sa. charged with 3 roses gu. (Coward); impaled with sa., 3 battle axes ar., handled, or (Hall); and paly of six, or, and az., over all a bend gu."

Near the above was another large mural monument, inscribed with a Latin epitaph, to the memory of Bridget, wife of the said William Coward, and only daughter of Thomas Hall, of Bradford, Wilts, K.B. by Catherine, dau. of Sir Edw. Seymour, of Berry Pomeroy, Devon. She died 22 Mar. 1682, aged 43.

Arms: Coward impaling Hall.

Under the chancel arch, (north) was, until recently, a tomb



with canopy supported by fluted Ionic columns. Beneath the canopy, on a stone slab, was the life-size recumbent statue of a man, in armour, girt with sword, and wearing a ruff of Elizabethan character. On this monument was a small tablet inscribed "Clara Chara Clercko, A'o D'ni 1547." Above this was a shield charged quarterly, 1 and 4, two bars, in chief three eschalops; 2 and 3, three arrows in pale. This monument was removed a few years ago. Some fragments of it may still be seen in the church, and the inscribed tablet and shield are inserted in the east wall of the north aisle of the chancel. The original position of the monument indicated wealth, and high social influence in Wells, and he to whose memory it was erected was probably a benefactor to the city and church. The deceased was, I believe, Henry Clerk, or Clerke, whose name often occurs in the municipal records in the time of Queen Elizabeth. In Wookey church is a costly tomb to perpetuate the memory of another of the same family, Thomas Clarke, Esq., who was elected M.P. for Wells in 1547, and continued as one of its representatives upwards of six years. He died in 1555.

Frances, wife of Richard Cupper, dau. of Fr.		
Sadler, of Everley, Wilts ... ..	—	6 Apl., 1676.
Richard Cupper, of Wells, Apothecary ...	—	9 Apl., 1707.
Elizabeth, wife of Guido Clynton ... ..	—	22 Sep., 1664.
Guido Clynton, Not. Pub. and Registrar of the Diocese ... ..	—	7 June, 1678.
(The 2 preceding in middle walk of chancel).		

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William, Son of James and Ann Coles... ..	—	9 Sep., 1804.	
John .. ..	—	17 April, 1812.	
Margaret Miles, wife of Henry Coles ... ..	—	24 April, 1843,	— 28
Anna Coles .. ..	—	5 Aug., 1852,	— 74
Ann, Widow of James Coles			
Ann, dau. .. ..			
Margaret Bartlett ... ..	—	Nov. 24, 18—	— 74
Ann Coles... ..	—	Aug. 1, 1794	— 19
Elizabeth Coles .. ..	—	Sept. 30, 1801	— 35

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John Collins, of London, Goldsmith & Citizen	—	Dec. 8, 1734	— 38
Charles Taylor .. ..	—	Dec. 11, 1759	— 59
Isabella, wife of Charles Taylor .. ..	—	April 24, 1758	— 49
Alice, dau. of Charles and Isabella Taylor ...	—	Sept. 19, 1807	
Sarah Slade, another dau. ... ..	—	Mar. 29, 1813	
(The 5 preceding from west end of Nave).			

In the south transept was a large mural monument, only part of which remains, inscribed with a Latin epitaph to the memory of Richard Comes, of Wells, Gent., and Elizabeth, (of the ancient

family of Godwyn), his wife. She died 10 July, 1692, aged 54. He died 22 July, 1697, aged 78.

Arms: Three lions passant, impaling a chev. betw. three blackmoors' heads.

Elizabeth, wife of Matt. Baron, dau. of  
Richard Comes ... .. — 29 Sep., 1699.

William Cross, of Yeovil, and late of Bath... — 26 Nov., 1798, — 64

Maurice Davies ... .. — 17 May, 1838, — 70

Jane, his wife, ... .. — 28 Aug., 1838, — 67

Also of their children,

Henry Davies... .. — 26 Sep., 1806, — 9

Mary " ... .. — 29 Jan., 1807, — 5

Henrietta " ... .. — 27 Mar., 1811, — 12

John " ... .. — 8 Oct., 1822, — 27

Frances " ... .. — 5 July, 1830, — 25

(The foregoing eight from a marble tablet on a pillar in the south Transept).

A mural (marble) monument at south east end of south aisle of Chancel:—

"Sacred to the memory of Francis Drake, Esquire, a Magistrate of the County of Somerset, and many years Recorder of this City. He was Minister of his Majesty George the Third, at Munich, and other foreign courts. In the administration of Justice he was distinguished by strict integrity of conduct, and undeviating firmness of purpose; as a diplomatist, by a thorough knowledge of the interests, and zeal for the welfare of his country. His high talents and uniform practice of the moral and social duties of life, secured him the esteem and regard of a large circle of friends. He married, Feb. 19th, 1795, Eliza Anne, daughter of Sir Herbert Mackworth, Bart., of Gnoll Castle, Glamorganshire. Died Jan. 10th, 1821, and is buried in a vault beneath."

On another mural tablet,

"Here lieth the body of Eliza Mackworth, widow of Sir Herbert Mackworth, Bart., of Gnoll Castle, in the county of Glamorgan. She was daughter of Robert Trefusis, Esq., of Trefusis, in the county of Cornwall. She was born on the 24th of January, 1788, and died Dec. 19th, 1799, leaving a son, Digby, the present Baronet, and one daughter, Eliza Anne, married to Francis Drake, Esq., of this City."

On a mural (marble) tablet on west wall of Trinity Chapel:—

"Sacred to the memory of Andrew Foster-Melliard, Esquire, of this parish. He was born 19th September, 1810, died 10th March, 1841, and is buried in a vault near this spot."

"Resting on the alone merits and atoning blood of his Redeemer, he fell asleep. Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Hic jacet corpus Johan'is Godwyn, gen., qui ob. xxvi die Aprilis, Anno Dom., 1610."

Ph . . . . . Josephi Godwyn de Wookey, gen', fil. et Joseph Shallet, A.M.,  
cujus Ecclesiae Vicar. . . . . ob . . . . . die Decemb., A.D. 1696.

[The above from east end of south aisle of chancel].

Phoebe, dan. of John Ghetwind, buried, 11th Sep., 1661.

Barbara, the daughter of Robert and Flora Gutch his wife, lyeth here interred, who dyed October the 20th, 1676.

And also the body of Charles Gutch, their sonne, who dyed Jan. 28, 1679.

Also Robert their sonne, who died August 19th, 1680.

[The foregoing are from partially obliterated inscribed stones formerly in the south transept, the burial place of the old and respectable Wells family of Gutch. The name occurs in the city records early in the 17th century.]

Nathaniel Gooch, Gent., of Wells...	...	19 Mar., 1660.	
William Goldfinch, of Wells, Gent.,	...	3 Dec., 1757,	78
Mary, wife of Wm. Goldfinch, dau. of Jno. Merton, Gent.	...	13 June, 1715,	32
William Goldfinch, their eldest son, buried	...	11 Feb., 1738,	37
Joseph their 2nd son, died at Vizapatam, India	...	3 Aug., 1729,	26
Mary, their eldest dau., buried	...	24 Jan., 1705,	7mo.
John their (first) son, buried	...	7 Mar., 1706,	9mo.
James their son, buried...	...	28 June, 1710,	23 wks.
Charles their son	...	25 April, 1711,	2mo.
And a still-born child	...	1775,	
Elizabeth, 2nd wife of William Goldfinch, Gent., dau. of Mr. John West	...	30 Jan., 1763,	72
Bridget, dau. of Wm. and Elizabeth Goldfinch	...	3 Nov., 1717,	1mo.
George their (first) son, buried	...	20 Oct., 1720,	1mo.
Martha their dau.	...	2 July, 1723,	3 wks.
John Goldfinch, Esq., of East Harptree	...	27 Jan., 1814,	77
Mary Goldfinch, dau. of John Goldfinch, Gent., grand niece of Jos. Norton, Mercer, great grand daughter of Jos. Norton, Gent.	...	20 Oct., 1754,	21
John Gallop, of Axbridge, gent.	...	Mar. 11, 1796,	55
Mary, wife of said Jno. Gallop	...	Nov. 29, 1814,	80
John Gallop, son of John and Mary Gallop	...	Aug. 28, 1843,	71

(The Goldfinch, Norton, and Gallop families are buried under flat stones at west end of nave).

Flat stone. Middle of nave.

Ann Giles, wife of Rich'd Giles	...	May 3, 1761,	56
John Garrod	...	15 May, 1828,	58
Elizabeth Garrod	...	28 Feb., 1829,	57
Mary Hole	...	25 Sep., 1852,	72
Elias Hole	...	21 Mar., 1797,	62
Elias, son of Elias and Elizabeth Hole	...	23 June, 1802,	28
Elizabeth, wife of Elias Hole	...	14 Dec., 1814,	74

[The 6 preceding from flat stones in North Aisle of Nave, the burial place of these families].

John Haule, of Harter's Hill	...	March, 1597.	
John Hall	...	12 Feb., 1637.	
Dorothy, wife of Andrew Hall	...		
Susanna, dau. of Andrew Hall	...	28 Jan., 1688.	
Helen, wife of Thomas Boulting; dau. of George Hall	...	22 Mar., 1751,	56

[From old stones formerly in the north aisle of Chancel].

"Here lyeth the body of Adrian Hickes, 3rd son of Richard Hickes, of this city, gent., who departed this life the 19th of June, Anno Dom., 167... æt. . . ."

Here resteth the body of Mrs. Anne Hickes, widow and wife of Mr. Richard Hickes, of this city, gent., who departed this life the 6th day of Feb'y, 1682."

[The two preceding from a flat stone near the centre of the middle walk of nave. Adrian Hickes was one of the founders of the Wells Blue Coat School].

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James Hurman, of Wells, Merchant ...	— 24 Sep., 1644,	— 64
Mary, dau. of John Hurman, al's Long ...	— 16 Sep., 1761.	
John Dorset Long ...	— 1767,	— 62
Alice, relict of John Long ...	— 16 Jan., 1762,	— 67
Jane, wife of Tho. Fuller, and dau. of John and Alice Long ...	— 24 Feb., 1796,	— 64
Elizabeth, wife of James Cannings, sister of Jane Fuller ...	— 28 Aug., 1800,	— 60

[The 7 preceding from flat stones near Chancel door].

From a metal plate, on which are shields impaling the arms of the Poulet family :—

"*Memoriæ Sacrum.*"

"Neare unto this Piller lyeth interred the body of Francis Hayes, late of this cittie, gent., whoes trylie vertuous life and pious death gave abundant cause both of love and sorrow to his remaininge frends. He departed, in assured hope of a joyfull resvrrction, the 4 day of September, A'o D'ni, 1623, of his age 34."

At the west end of north aisle of nave is a large mural monument with a long latin inscription to the memory of "Richardus Healy, Gulielmi Healy, S.T.P. filius; Richardi Healy nepos; Obiit Jan. MDCCXLIV. Ætat. XXI."

Arms: Quarterly, 1 and 4, Sa., on a chev. engrailed Or, bet. three lions, ramp. Or, as many crosses patée Gu. (Healy): 2 and 3, Vert, on a chief sa. three martlets Or.

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Elizabeth Hodges ...	— 7 May, 1775,	— 33
Matthew Hodges ...	— April, 1760,	— 50

[The two preceding from a flat stone, west end of nave].

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Elizabeth Hoare, wife of John Hoare ...	— 5 Sep., 1801,	— 40
Henry Hoare, their son ...	— 3 Mar., 1810,	— 19
John Hoare ...	— 20 Sep., 1813,	— 60

On a mural tablet, in the chapel of the Holy Trinity :—

"Sacred to the memory of John Holloway, Esquire, Admiral of the Red, who was born in Wells, Jan. 25, 1743, and died in his birth place, June 25th, 1826. In him was concentrated a rare combination of estimable qualities; the ingenuousness of the seaman; the sincerity of a genuine friend; and the integrity and honourable feeling which characterize the gentleman; while the calmness and sincerity of his mind, amid the sensible decay of his vital powers, strongly bespoke the christian's expectation of a better and happier world. To testify her regret at the loss of one so worthy her esteem and regard, this tablet has been erected by his afflicted widow."

Arms: Party per pale, Gu. and Sa., a fesse Or, bet. three crescents Ar.; in base a key and anchor in saltier Or: impaled with Ar., three bulls' heads caboosed Sa., horned Or (Walrond). Motto, STEADY. Crest, two swords in saltire through a naval crown.

James Hooke ... ..	— 23 Feb., 1817, —	75
Jane, his sister... ..	— 16 Feb., 1827, —	81
Anne, another sister ... ..	— 26 May, 1828, —	79

[The 3 preceding from a flat stone near the "Exchequer."]

"Underneath are the remains of Mr. John Irish, late of this city, who died December 17, 1701, at 50 years of age, leaving Mrs. Elizabeth his beloved wife, so discrete and tender a mother that she continued his widow near 32 years till she dyed, Nov. 28th, 1733, after a life of 74 years, towards the end of which she had the sore affliction of loosing Mrs. Grizell, her daughter, who was very agreeable in person, and much more so in her behaviour; esteemed in her life and universally lamented in her death, which befel her April 28th, 1725, at 37 years of age."

"Here also resteth the body of Mrs. Elizabeth Irish, daughter of the above John and Elizabeth, who died, Nov. 24th, 1744, aged 51."

"Elizabeth, another of her daughters, buried in the north part of this church-yard, who died an infant."

[The above ("Irish") memorials, were in north aisle nearly opposite the Chancel Arch].

On a mural tablet in the north aisle of Chancel, near North Transept :—

"H. S. E. Robertus Kingston A.M. hujusce ecclesiæ Vicarijs per videnos fere annos. Adjutor ecclesiæ parochialis de Wokey non ita pridem ipse factus Vicarius. Pastor erat et fidelis et bonus; amicus certus, vir integer, uxori, liberis, famulis, familiaribus, pauperibus, denique et bonis omnibus charus vixit, defendus obiit iv. Aug. A.D. 1748, annum agens xliii. Patri accumbit Elizabetha fillola, quæ trimestris eheu demessa est xxx Decembris A.D., 1743."

Arms : Sa. a cross Or betw. four leopards' faces Ar. of the last.

On the floor a stone inscribed :—

"To the memory of Robert Kingston, Esq., son of the Rev. Robert Kingston and Mary his wife, a native of this city; a Major General in the army, a brave soldier, and an honest man. He died Jan. 24th, 1813, in the 23rd year of his age. Also his sister, Barbara Kingston, who died Dec. 24th, 1819, aged 75."

Arms: Sa. a cross Or betw. four leopards' faces Ar. of the last; impaling Erm., on a bend Sa. three Plates.

Margaret Kingston, dau. of R. C. ... .. — 7 Nov., 1805, — 67

Thomas Kitson ... .. — 6 Oct., 1615.

Thomas Kitson ... .. — 22 Dec., 167—

On a small brass plate in a frame, in South Transept :—

"Here resteth in assured hope to rise in Christ, the bodye of Henry Killinghosen, borne at Hamburge, in Germanye, who came to see this country, and learne the language, and died here in the feare of God, the 11th of August, Anno Verbi incarnati, 1615, et Ætatisvce 19"

Flat stone, North Transept :—

"Here lyeth the body of Ann, the daughter of Edmund Lovell, and Sara, his wife, who died January 16th, 1661."

Here also lyeth the body of Thomas, son of Edmund Lovell, and Sara, his wife, who dyed the 21st of July, 1662."

These Babes of Bethlem  
 Here made little stay,  
 Leaving the breast  
 To goe the Milkye way;  
 To change their cradles  
 For eternal day,  
 Hath made them gayners.  
 . . . Rachel's cry.

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Sarah, wife of Robert Loveless	... ..	— 24 May, 1774.	
Sarah Loveless	... ..	— 15 Mar., 1800,	— 56
Susanna Loveless	... ..	— 18 Jan., 1834,	— 66
William Loveless	... ..	— 3 Mar., 1838,	— 68

[The 4 preceding from middle walk of nave].

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A large monument, formerly in the north aisle of chancel, but now removed into the tower. Under an entablature supported by two solid columns, in which is represented the figure of a man kneeling in the attitude of prayer is this memorial:—

"Here resteth the body of Henry Luellin, gent., who deceased the 26th daie of Julie, anno D'ni 1614."

Arms: Or. a lion ramp. Sa., crowned of the First; Crest, a chough Sa.

[This is the Founder of "Llewellyn's" or the Widows' Alms-house. This monument was removed to the tower to make room for the new organ. It is to be regretted that the wishes and memory of so great a benefactor to the city should not have been more respected. The directions given by the testator in his will (dated 22nd July, 1604), are thus expressed:—"Item, my request is to the Parish of Wells that I may be buried in the North Aisle, above my seat, right against the middle window of the said aisle, and my will is that my executor shall bestow one hundred marks for a tomb for me in the said place."]

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George Lax, Esq., of Wells ... .. — 15 Jan., 1812, — 72

[A mural tablet near South Transept].

Thomas Lax, of W. Hornington ... .. — 1 Nov., 1816, — 81

Sarah, his wife... .. — 25 Jan., 1801, — 69

Sarah, their dau. ... .. — 30 May, 1844, — 79

[The 3 preceding from a mural tablet on south side of Chancel Arch].

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"Here lieth the body of Elizabeth Mattocke, wife of Arthur Mattocke, gent., daughter and heir of Charles Curtis, of East Harptrey, gent. She died the 26th of March, 1708, in ye 22 year of her age."

"Here lies also the body of Thomas Roberts, of this city, gent., who died the 15th day of April, 1668, aged 36."

Arms: a chev. betw. three fleur de lis, impaling three bulls' heads.

"At the foot of this stone lies also the body of ye above named Arthur Mattocke, gent., who dyed March ye 12th, 1713, *Ætatis suæ*, 39."

"George Mattocke, gent., dyed ye 5 October, 1736, aged 53."

[From flat stones in middle chancel walk].

On a mural tablet at east end of south aisle of the Chancel :—

"In memory of William Melliar, Esquire, of this parish, whose mortal remains are deposited in a vault beneath. He was born 14th Feb., 1757, and died 7th August, 1840."

"Also in memory of Frances, his wife, daughter of Robert Tudway, Esquire, who died 11th March, 1795, and of Frances Mary, their only child, who died 4th Dec., 1806, aged 11 years."

Ezekiel Nash, son of Ezekiel N., of Wells	...	...	...	...	18 Dec., 1680,	—	29
John Nash, of Wells, gent.	...	...	...	...	28 Dec., 1803,	—	79
Susanna, his wife	...	...	...	...	17 May, 1812,	—	76

[From flat stone in the Chancel].

Joseph Norton, of Wells, gent.	...	...	...	...	18 Feb., 1721-2		
Priscilla, his wife	...	...	...	...	23 Oct., 1726,	—	70
Mary, wife of Wm. Norton	...	...	...	...	1 Nov., 1745,		

[The 3 preceding from stones, west end of nave].

Gabriel Odingsells, gent.	...	...	...	...	8 July, 1713,	—	63
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[From a stone formerly outside communion rails].

... Parsons, M.D., of Hill Bishops	...	...	...	...	1679.		
Mary Pearce, wife of Peter Pearce	...	...	...	...	11 Sep., 1689.		
James Paine, B.D.	...	...	...	...	18 Feb., 1740,	—	42

[The preceding 3 from flat stone, in north aisle of Chancel].

Thomas Parfitt	...	...	...	...	...	17	, —	61
Elizabeth, his wife	...	...	...	...	...	17	, —	63
Peter, their son	...	...	...	...	...			32
Mary, their daughter...	...	...	...	...	...	1710,	—	9 mo's.
Charles Pomeroy	...	...	...	...	...	28 Dec., 1766,	—	56
Jane, his wife	...	...	...	...	...	31 Oct., 1770,	—	69

Joseph Parsons	...	...	...	...	...	23 Sep., 1851,	—	54
Isabella, his wife	...	...	...	...	...	22 Dec., 1843,	—	41

[The two preceding from a mural tablet on chancel arch].

"Here lies ye body of Thomas Robertson, of this citty, gent., who dyed ye 15 day of April, 1683, aged 36."

Over south door, on a mural monument :—

"In memory of William Salmon, of this city, who died Nov. 22nd, 1761, aged 81 years; and of Elizabeth his wife, who died Aug. 6th, 1765, aged 80 years.

"Also Elizabeth, wife of Thomas Salmon, of Bristol, who died Feb. 19th, 1791, aged 50. Likewise three of their children.

"Also of the said Thomas Salmon, who died June 16th, 1798, aged 67 years.

"Also of William, brother of the above named Thomas Salmon, who died Sept. 15th, 1798, aged 74 years.

"Also of Elizabeth, daughter of the above named William and Elizabeth Salmon, who died August 8th, 1807, aged 85."

In the floor near south door :—

"Elizabeth Salmon died on the 5 of May, 1807, aged 47 years,"

"Mary Salmon died June 26th, 1836, aged 61 years."

**Marble tablet in south transept :—**

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.

"Sacred to the memory of Elizabeth Salmon, of this city, who departed this life the 3rd of August, 1807, aged 85."

This monument was erected by the daughters of the late Robert Salmon, as a tribute of regard for their affectionate Aunt.

**At the west end of south aisle, on a mural monument :—**

"Sacred to the memory of William Salmon, gent., son of Henry Salmon, of Wrington, Gentleman, who rests near this place. Out of pious regard to his affectionate brother, Samuel Salmon erected this monument, A.D. MDCCCLXIII."

**Arms : Three Salmons haurient, impaling another coat.**

[The family of Salmon long resided in Wells. The name of William Salmon occurs 3 Henry VII. Thomas Salmon was Mayor in 1647, 1656, and William Salmon was Mayor in 1675, 1683, 1694, 1700, 1715, 1723, and 1729].

**From a brass plate (detached from its old position) :—**

Here lieth Rebecca, the wife of William Sever, of this City (Mercer), who died the 11th Dec., 1727, aged 23.

Martha, wife of Richard Slade, Esq., 3rd dau.

of Jos. Pearce, of Wells, gent. ... .. — 14 Jan., 1759, — 51

Richard Slade, of Wells, Gent. ... .. — 16 Feb., 1780, — 75

Edward Slade ... .. — 6 Sep., 1724, — 56

[The 3 preceding from north aisle of chancel].

Samuel William Serrell (within Altar rails) — 21 Nov., 1815, — 3

Joseph Shallett, M.A., Vicar of St. Cuthbert's

(from east end of south chancel aisle) ... .. — 14 Jan., 1708, — 56

Honor Spicer ... .. — 20 Aug., 1810, — 72

Ven'ble Charles Thirlby, Archdeacon of Wells,

and Vicar of St. Cuthbert's, Wells ... .. — 6 Nov., 1683, — 59

Elizabeth, his widow ... .. — 2 April, 1700, —

Sarah Thirlby ... .. — 22 Feb., 1732, — 73

[The three preceding from a flat stone in south aisle, near south door].

"To the Memory of Charles Tudway, Esq., second son of Mr. Charles Tudway, by his wife Mary, daughter of Mr. Thomas Cook, of Hay. He served this city four times as Mayor, and in the last Parliament of George II. was one of its representatives. He died the 4th of September, 1770, aged 56, and was buried in this church. By his wife, Hannah, eldest daughter of Mr. William Moore, he had four sons and four daughters, of whom Sarah and Ann died young. Hannah, relict of the above Charles Tudway, died in October, 1783, aged 70 years, and was buried in the same place with her husband."

"To the memory of Clement Tudway, Esq., eldest son of Charles Tudway, Esq., of this place, and Hannah his wife, who was born October 8th, 1734, and died July 7th, 1815. He married Elizabeth, youngest daughter of Sir Rowland Hill, Bart., of Hawkstone, Shropshire, by whom he had no issue. He served the office of Mayor of this city ten times, and had the honour to be one of the representatives in Parliament from the year 1760, to the time of his death."

[The foregoing from mural tablets at east end of south aisle of Chancel].

Joseph Teek, of Dulcote ... .. — 1 Sep., 1821, — 66

Sarah, his wife ... .. — 28 July, 1846, — 90

[From a flat stone in the North Aisle].



A stone, formerly in the chancel, is thus inscribed :—

"Here resteth the body of Valentine Tryme, of this city, gent., . . . day of Octob., in the year 1660.

"Worne out with businesse and disease, here's  
One layd down to take some ease;  
That which in 's life hee scarce could have,  
He might at length finde in the grave.  
Faithfully diligent in 's trust,  
Lesse to himselfe then others just,  
A faithful frind, a husband deere,  
A careful father lyeth here;  
If any or all these move thee,  
Frind give a tear to 's memorie.

"Here lyeth the body of Margaret Tryme, Widdow, the wife and relict of the above menconed Vallentine Tryme, who departed this lyfe the 7th day of December, aged 51.

Mary Templeman ... — 29 Sep., 1768, — 28

Mary Tuson, wife of Edward Tuson ... — 3 Dec., 1816, — 73

Edward Tuson, Esq., son of Geo. and Ann Tuson— 9 May, 1825, — 68

Ann Tuson, wife of George Tuson, Gent. ... — 17 June, 1782, — 54

Geo. Tuson, of the Liberty of St. Andrew, Gent.— 6 Aug., 1788, — 62

James Tuson, Esq., (brother of the said Geo. Tuson), of Boxford, Suffolk ... — 9 Nov., 1804, — 73

[The 5 preceding from marble tablets in the Chancel].

John Collins, Citizen and Goldsmith, London — 8 Dec., 1734, — 38

Chas. Taylor ... — 11 Dec., 1759, — 59

Isabella, wife of Chas. Taylor ... — 24 April, 1758, — 49

Alice, their daughter... — 9 Sep., 1807,

Sarah Slade, another daughter... — 29 Mar., 1813,

A mural tablet near east end of north aisle of chancel :—

"To the memory of Sir Charles William Taylor, Bart., of Hollycombe, Sussex, Rector of this parish, and representative of this city in nine successive Parliaments, during 34 years. Born April 25th, 1770, died April 10th, 1857. This tablet was placed here by his affectionate son and heir."

John Willcox ... — 15 Oct., 75

Ruth, his wife ... — 5 Nov., 1729, — 67

[The two foregoing from South Transept].

Ann, wife of William Walter ... — . . . 17 —

Anne, dau. of Ann and Sam. Walter ... — 12 Dec., 170 —

Samuel Walter ... — . . . 1733, —

Thomas Westley, Gent. (Chancel) ... — 16 Feb., 1707, — 77

Marble tablet on chancel arch :—

Rev. William Provis Wickham ... — 22 Mar., 1843, — 75

Annabella, his widow ... — 16 Mar., 1850, — 86

[The 2 preceding, from Chancel].

Mary Yorke, widow ... — Sep., 1713, — 68

James Yorke, Gent. ... — Oct., 1744, — 67

William, son of James Yorke ... — April, 1724, —

Christopher Yorke, Apothecary ... — . . . 1750, —

Mary Yorke ... — 7 Mar., 1773, — 71

The window in the eastern wall of the south aisle of the Chancel, was restored, and the stained glass inserted, in the year 1865, by Miss Emma H. S. Tudway. The artist was Bell, of Bristol. The window is a memorial to several members of the Tudway family. In the lower part is an inscription "In memory of John Paine Tudway ; also of Frances Gould, his wife, and their three daughters, Letitia, Augusta, and Henrietta." In the five lower lights are eleven medallions, and in the upper part of the centre, a figure of our Saviour giving an answer to the acts of mercy with which six of them are filled:—"Inasmuch as ye did it unto these, ye have done it unto Me." The other five are scenes from our Lord's life:--Presentation in the Temple; Disputing with the Doctors; Before Pilate; Bearing His Cross; The Marys and the Angels in the Tomb. The panels are formed by foliage of a rich and varied character on grounds of ruby, blue, &c. In the tracery are figures of Religion, Faith, Hope, and Charity. An angel holds a scroll on which is inscribed, "We praise Thee, O God;" the angels in the lower lights continue the sentence,—“We acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.” A Lamb and Dove, with appropriate foliage, complete the work.

The two smaller windows in the Chancel are also memorials of the same family, and were placed there by the late R. C. Tudway, Esq., M.P. for Wells, whose premature death occurred in 1855, deeply lamented by his family as well as by his friends and constituents. Both of these windows were painted by Mrs. Tudway, except the central light of that on the south side, which was the work of Miss Henrietta Tudway. The centre light in the window on the north side of the chancel contains symbols of the Crucifixion, with the words on a sort of scroll, "This is My body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me." "This Cup is the New Testament in My blood which is shed for you." In the centre light of the window on the south side of the Chancel, "Suffer little children to come unto Me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." At the bottom of this window is the following memorial,—“In memory of William Henry Tudway. Died Dec. 7th, 1851, aged 2 y'rs and 10 m's.”

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## ADDITIONAL NOTES.

Since writing my Notes on the early history of the Church of St. Cuthbert, (p.p., 4-8), my attention has been directed by F. H. Dickinson, Esq., to a record in the "Drokensford" Register, in the Diocesan Registry, as to the division of Prebends, in which reference is incidentally made to a Church of St. Cuthbert, of a date anterior to the time of Bishop Robert. This record mentions a gift of half a hide in Wotton, with a virgate of land there, which Bishop Giso gave to the Church of St. Mary, and half a hide which Bishop *Godfrey* gave to the Church of St. Cuthbert at its dedication.—"Dimidiam etiam hidam in Wotton cum Virgate terræ quam jocundæ recordationis Giso episcopus capellæ beatæ Mariæ necnon et dimidiam hidam quam piæ memoriæ Godfridus episcopus ecclesiæ Sancti Cuthberti contulisse noscitur in sua dedicatione decimam quoque vini nostri memoratæ ecclesiæ Sancti Andree concedimus." It is possible that a Church of small dimensions stood on the site of the present edifice, in the time of Bishop Godfrey, who succeeded to the see A.D. 1122, and died A.D. 1135, and the dedication of the Church to St. Cuthbert, indirectly gives this some confirmation.

THE PULPIT has not been mentioned; and in connection with the Church, it is of a most incongruous character. It is, however, a very good example of Jacobean work, carved in oak, and hexagonal in shape. There are now five panels perfect, in which are rudely represented Jacob wrestling with the Angel; Sampson slaying the lion; David meeting Goliath: Jonah being delivered from the whale; and Daniel in the den of lions. Its position has been, within the last 20 years, changed several times, with the desire that the preacher should be heard by persons in different parts of the Church as distinctly as possible. It formerly stood closer than now in the angle formed by the east and north walls of the old central tower, and access to it was obtained through an entrance cut in the same north wall. Over the head of this entrance are the words "Thy word is Truth." Since then it has been advanced a short distance forward into its present position. A good opportunity offers for some liberal and well-disposed person, to supply a pulpit more in keeping with, and more worthy of the Church in which it stands.

And as a last and final note, I earnestly entreat early attention to a completion of the plan for the new seats in the church, and more especially to the state of the Fabric of the church, which, in many parts, is falling into a lamentable state of decay, and imperatively demands a careful survey and substantial repairs.



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